

SON OF THE MORNING



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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

SON OF THE MORNING:

A Portrait
of Friedrich Nietzsche

by

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN



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TO RUTH GORGEL
AS ROMER WOULD HAVE WISHED

PREFATORY NOTE

It has been my aim in this book to tell the true story of Nietzsche's life for the first time. Until now most of what was significant in his career has been either unperceived or suppressed. The paramount importance of his relationship to Cosima Wagner has been partially perceived or suspected by several French and German writers, but an attentive reader of the present narrative will soon find that even Andler has missed some of the most important points.

It has been my good fortune to cast new light on the crucial psychological experience of Nietzsche at Sils-Maria out of which his final philosophy of the Will to Power and of Eternal Recurrence was born, and to be enabled to link it to a tragic experience in Nietzsche's childhood.

Finally, I have succeeded in tracing Nietzsche's hostility to Wagner to a period much earlier than has been suspected hitherto, and to show that *The Birth of Tragedy*, which is Nietzsche's first book, deals with Wagner in a spirit of ironic arrogance.

I have made my own translations of such passages from Nietzsche and his correspondents as I have quoted.

EDWARD J. O'BRIEN.

OXFORD,
March 22, 1932.

SON OF THE MORNING

THE streets were lined with banners that day in Röcken, and at ten o'clock in the morning the bells rang madly with joy for the King's birthday. As the first tones cut the sunshine, a boy was born, the first child of the Pastor, who thankfully named him, in honour of his King and patron, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. It was the 15th of October, 1844. The boy's spiritual forerunner, Hölderlin, had died the previous year.

When the christening came, the father prayed aloud in thankfulness: 'Blessed month of October! For many years the turning-points in my life have come in your thirty-one days, and now I mark the greatest and most wonderful of all by baptizing my little son! Happy day! Beautiful festival! Unspeakably holy duty! In the name of the Lord I bless you! With overflowing heart I pronounce these words: Bring me this, my beloved son, that I may consecrate him to the Lord. My son, Friedrich Wilhelm, so shall you be called on earth, in memory of my royal patron on whose birthday you were born!'

In the father's mind the boy was to grow up as a prince of the earth. Was he not of noble lineage? It was a family tradition that the Nietzsches were really

Nietzskys, Polish earls who had lost their title and lands in fighting for religious reform, lonely heroes sentenced to death for their consciences, who had fled from the Catholic God in the name of liberty. Nietzsche in later life clung proudly to this tradition and sought to establish it in historical fact.

Apart from this, the Nietzsches were family-proud. Had not grandfather been a high official of the Lutheran church, a distinguished theologian and Herder's successor? Had not grandmother been an honoured member of Goethe's circle at Weimar? Nay, had not great-grandmother been loved by Goethe himself? Had not father been honoured by the custody of the Altenburg princesses, and was not his living at Röcken held by royal command? Father was young and the future a golden horizon.

The Nietzsches were a family to be respected, as the Pastor's child wife discovered to her sorrow. Pastor Nietzsche, however, appears to have been of unstable equilibrium. He was born a few days before the battle of Leipzig and close to the battle-field in anxious days of danger and restlessness. His mother in later years would tell her grandchildren, while tears came into her eyes, long tales of that autumn, how the soldiers swarmed over the country-side and into the houses. In after years she would startle awake in terror whenever the shutters rattled, remembering the knocking of the soldiers at her door. Fate knocked at the door! She was grandfather's second wife, and he was her second husband. Her only child by her

first marriage died as a little boy. The Nietzsches, however, were long-lived and proud of it.

Pastor Nietzsche was the youngest of ten children, his mother's Benjamin. When he was born, his eldest half-brother was twenty-nine. He was also his brothers' and sisters' favourite.

We can dimly picture the courtship. Perhaps it was dim to the good Pastor himself, whose short sight could not distinguish faces clearly. At any rate, a very serious royal tutor of twenty-nine, a tall, slender parson, fond of music and poetry, went on a visit one day and met a girl of seventeen whom he liked very well, though hardly a year had passed since she had ceased playing in secret with her dolls. Pastor Oehler, her father, respected the Nietzsches highly. He found life difficult with eleven mettlesome children, cheerful hunter and card-player though he was. No doubt he raised no obstacles to a speedy marriage, for on Pastor Nietzsche's birthday that very year the little wild girl was married to her grave suitor, and the days of her captivity in his punctilious family began.

Nietzsche once wrote that a man is much more the child of his four grandparents than of his father and mother. According to Andler, the Oehlers were profane Christians and the Nietzsches more or less ascetic freethinkers. Both families hungered to rule, but in different ways, and the conflict of these dominations in Nietzsche's heart had much to do with his lifelong tragedy. Remember also that this conflict developed in a boy born and brought up in Thuringia,

the traditional centre of protestantism and intellectual revolt, the land of angry preachers, of Lessing and Fichte, of Martin Luther himself whose God was a strong city of proud towers.

'My father . . . was frail, lovable, and unhealthy, like a man predestined to pay a hasty visit — a gentle reminder of life rather than life itself . . . What I specially owe to him is the fact that I need to employ no special attention, but only a little patience, in order to enter involuntarily a higher and rarer universe . . . In one other way I am my father all over again, as if I were the prolongation of his life after his premature death. Like every one who has never succeeded in meeting an equal, and to whom the idea of "retaliation" is just as inexplicable as that of "equal rights", I have denied to myself any means of safety or protection — as well as defence and "justification", of course — whenever I have become the victim either of petty or even *very great* stupidity.'

Such is Nietzsche's account of his father in *Ecce Homo*, and if we read between the lines I think we shall see a proud gentle lonely man absorbed in a world of visions from which the claims of marriage draw him back reluctant, unable to share his visions, unwilling to minimize them, resolutely turned away from life but determined never to wound it by admitting how far away from the fireside his heart really lies.

Did the Nietzsches desire their line continued and force him into marriage with a girl whom they knew

they could rule, and afterwards did he think it all 'a very great stupidity,' yet give no sign? Certainly not when his son was born. Unto us a son is given. The Nietzsche in him conquered then. If life was a dream to him, in his son it might prove a reality. *He* had been born in the fear of battle, his son amidst rejoicing on a great King's birthday. After these reflections he would turn to his music, no doubt, and peer absorbedly at the notes before him.

The young Frau Nietzsche, says her daughter, was very high-spirited, wilful and headstrong. As a child she had constant tiffs with her brothers and sisters. The girl-bride of seventeen must have wondered whether she would prove a match for the Nietzsches. Would she be mistress or not in her new home? For there lived not only the Pastor but his sister Rosalie, who had long kept house for him, and his mother who left the parsonage only for short annual periods. The girl who had put away her dolls to marry a man who was thirteen years her senior was assuming a hotly contested position, and it was many years before she found herself free and the undisputed mistress of her own home.

Reading between the lines of her daughter's account, we can infer a great deal. Grandmother was respected by everyone, Aunt Rosalie undertook the housekeeping, 'and with the help of excellent servants fulfilled the task in a really exemplary way.' The Oehlers with their eleven children were evidently not exemplary, and Aunt Rosalie intended to see to it

that the new-comer should not coarsen the perfect housekeeping ways of the noble Nietzsches.

Nietzsche's sister informs us that her mother in later life emphatically denied that she had found it easy to adapt herself to her new surroundings.

Her children were very fond of Aunt Rosalie, her sister-in-law, who continually lectured her and roused her to the point of rebellion. This was all concealed from the children's father, because he was extremely sensitive, and brooded over every little cloud of discord. Whenever there was the slightest hint of friction, he would retire to his room and keep silence, refusing all food and drink. When matters came to a head, and the Pastor could not achieve the necessary absorption, 'our father was . . . often able to take her away and show her the world.'

The lovable 'decadent', as Nietzsche calls him, was obviously afraid of his sister and too cowardly to defend his lonely young wife. He fled to the ivory tower whenever manhood was called for, and played dead until a measure of calm had been restored. Aunt Rosalie was clearly not one to delay battle, and the year between Frau Nietzsche's marriage and Fritz's birth must have been wretched to a child so high-spirited. If she played the game, what repressions must have attended the baby's coming! Perhaps she even wondered at the Pastor's joy.

In after years their son wrote bitterly: 'The unresolved disharmonies in the character and feelings of the parents linger on in the child's character and compose

the history of its interior suffering' And again: 'It may frequently happen that noble men with the highest aim must fight their worst battles as children; . . . living, like Lord Byron, in continuous conflict with a childish and passionate mother. Anyone who has had this experience will always be unable to forget who was his greatest and most dangerous enemy.'

I do not accept Nietzsche's judgment of his mother, but we shall see that her elders had the same opinion and alienated him from her in early years.

FRIEDRICH was born with a love of music. This came to him from his father. When he was a year old, music could calm him, and if he cried, the Pastor would be asked to play the piano. Then Fritz would sit up straight in his cot watching his father like a solemn little mouse.

When he was a year and nine months old his sister Elizabeth was born, and two years later a brother. A few weeks before his fourth birthday, his father came home from a walk with some friends one night, and was met at the door of the parsonage by his little dog. The Pastor was very short-sighted and usually preoccupied. Somehow the animal tripped him and howled as the Pastor fell backwards down seven stone steps, striking his head on the stones of the courtyard below. He was carried into the house with concussion of the brain.

His daughter's account of what ensued is rather confused. On one occasion she states that the Pastor recovered for a while, was able to write sermons, and suffered chiefly from loss of appetite and severe headaches, adding oddly enough that the delicate Nietzsche organ was the stomach. On the other hand she writes elsewhere that as a result of his fall he had concussion of the brain and died only after a long illness of eleven months. The question has been raised more than once

whether the Pastor's fall was the cause or the effect of his illness, for Nietzsche himself suggests that his father's mind was unstable. The general medical opinion is that he probably died of diffuse encephalitis.

It is certain that the circumstances of his father's death shrouded Fritz's whole childhood profoundly in gloom. So his sister bears witness, and this is strange, for Fritz was not yet five when the Pastor died. Something appears to be suppressed in these conflicting accounts. Did Frau Nietzsche and Aunt Rosalie have a more violent quarrel than usual? Did the Pastor flee in unusual agitation? Did Fritz witness the accident from a window?

Some months later Nietzsche's brother died of teething convulsions. Here is Fritz's account written when he was fourteen. 'If a tree loses its crown, it withers and the birds leave its boughs. Our family had lost its crown; joy left our hearts, and a deep sadness took up its abode within us. Hardly had our wounds begun to close when they were reopened painfully. At this time I had a dream in which I heard sad organ music, like that at a burial. And as I was trying to find out what was the cause of this playing, a tomb opened suddenly and my father appeared, wrapped in his shroud. He crossed the church, and came back with a little child in his arms. The tomb opened once more, my father disappeared, and the stone swung back into place. The organ music stopped immediately and I woke up. Next morning I related

the dream to my dear mother. Soon after my little brother Josef fell ill, and died after a nervous crisis in a few hours. Our grief was appalling. My dream was fulfilled precisely, for the tiny corpse was placed in the arms of my father.'

Now, on the 11th of September 1879, when Nietzsche had attained precisely the same age as that of his father when the fatal accident took place, he wrote to Peter Gast: 'I have reached the end of my thirty-fifth year - "the middle of life," as folk for a century and a half used to call this age. It was at this age that Dante had his vision . . . Now I am in the middle of life and so "circled with death" that at any moment it may seize me. To judge from the nature of my sufferings I must count upon a *sudden* death in convulsions . . . There are conditions in which it seems to me more suitable to go back to one's mother, one's home, and the memories of one's childhood.' Is Nietzsche remembering his father's death and his brother's, and drawing a prophetic inference?

The Pastor's death did not leave Frau Nietzsche free. He had made a will appointing a relative as guardian of his children. Mother and they stayed on at Röcken for eight months, guarded by grandmother and Aunt Rosalie, and it was not until April 1850 that they bade farewell at last to the parsonage. Friedrich never forgot his sad departure. He had been put to bed early, but in the night he rose and dressed himself, and went out into the courtyard in which the dog who had killed his father was howling, while the

cold moon shone over the parsonage. The cold moon appeared again one silent night near Sils-Maria when the terrible idea came of Eternal Recurrence. Do you remember Zarathustra's words?

'So spake I ever more softly, for I feared my own thoughts and behind-thoughts. Then suddenly I heard a dog howling near me.

'Had I ever heard a dog howl so? My thoughts hurried back. Yes! In the days of my childhood, the days of my earliest childhood!

'— Then had I heard a dog howl so. And seen it as well, with bristling hair, its head lifted, shivering in the stillest hour of night, when even dogs believe in ghosts.

'— So that it aroused my pity. For just then the full moon stole, silent as death, over the house; just then it stood still, a glowing sphere — at rest on the flat roof as if on someone's tenement.'

In *The Joyful Wisdom* Nietzsche also says: 'I have given a name to my suffering and call it "a dog."'

And finally in the climax of the great *Drunken Song* which leads *Thus Spake Zarathustra* to a processional close, the terrible words ring out on the stroke of midnight: 'Woe unto me! Whither has time sped away? Have I not sunk into deep wells? The world is asleep—

'Ah! Ah! The dog howls. The moon shines. Rather will I die than utter to you what my midnight-heart is now thinking.

'I have died already. It is over. Spider, why are you spinning your web around me? Will you have blood? Ah! Ah! The dew is falling, the hour is at hand —

'The hour in which I freeze and congeal, which keeps asking and asking and asking: "Who has sufficient courage?

' "— Who is to be the master of the world?"'

I suggest that Friedrich Nietzsche, before he was six years old, had a fit in the night when he left Röcken for Naumburg, that he saw his father's tomb with the moon above the flat roof and a spider weaving his labyrinth over the wall, that the moon laughed on that tomb while the dog who killed his father howled at the moon, and that this fit was repeated at intervals throughout Nietzsche's life when moonlight and a dog's howling acted upon him with the necessary force of suggestion.

Grandmother had chosen Naumburg as their new home. The young widow of twenty-four 'who was very fond of her' followed on. Grandmother had friends in the town. Now all these grief-stricken women, to whom Aunt Augusta was added, lived together, each trying to repress her private feelings. Their lives were absorbed in the children. Grandmother considered their mother too severe. So did Aunt Rosalie, who was otherwise none too gentle. Frau Nietzsche would also be reminded that she must be a credit to the family in their new home.

Naumburg was a little Tory city supporting God and the King, doing its duty by both with conscientious severity. Grandmother's 'useful friendships' forced her daughter-in-law into the rigid circle of the Justices of the High Court who ruled the life of the city.

'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott' was their motto. Spartan living and high thinking prevailed, outward democracy, inward aristocracy of hereditary brains and power. It must have been a little Geneva or Boston administered by the elect of divine right.

It was characteristic of Grandmother that she should believe in democratic education. Therefore Nietzsche was sent to the Municipal Boys' School. He was an utter misfit there. The other boys called him 'The Little Minister.' The Prussia of rules and respect so far controlled him.

One day a downpour of rain fell as school was dismissed. The other boys ran down the street as fast as they could, but Fritz stalked slowly homeward with his cap covering his slate and his handkerchief covering his cap. Frau Nietzsche saw him coming and called to him to run, but his pace did not alter. When she scolded him for coming home drenched, he replied with priggish severity: 'But, Mama, the rules of the school say: after leaving school, boys are forbidden to jump and run about in the streets, but must walk home quietly in a gentlemanly manner.'

The school was not a success. Grandmother's experiment in democracy had failed. In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche says to us: 'We must have no nerves . . . Even to *suffer* from solitude is wrong — the only thing I have always suffered from is "solitude" . . . In fact, when I was seven years old, I knew already that no speech of men would ever reach my ears. Has any one ever seen me sad about it?'

LET us try to picture the home life of the Nietzsches at this time. A little boy and girl live alone with four women who are preoccupied with their education and with each other. Every incident and every act is discussed to the most minute detail, wrangled over, never settled by compromise. Frau Nietzsche is the most aggressive, but she has by no means the strongest will. Perhaps she proves stronger than Aunt Rosalie, however. All we know is that it is Aunt Augusta who now conducts the household affairs, and that she and Grandmother are thought kind. Aunt Rosalie has transferred her energies to 'Christian benevolent institutions.' She is also much interested in science and politics. Frau Nietzsche shows what her daughter considers a sense of reality and a certain scepticism regarding human (*i.e.*, Nietzschean) affairs. Fritz feels this himself.

Elisabeth and he seem to have been model children of a repressed sort, too good for human nature's daily food. Fritz was priggishly pious, avoiding company, and wandering off alone to beautiful places whenever he could to enjoy melancholy thoughts in solitude. He was shy and ill at ease with strangers. His school-mates dared not use coarse language in his presence.

As one of the boys said: 'Oh, he looks at you in a way that makes the words stick in your throat.'

Yet he was strong and healthy in those days, even a leader in school games. A stocky fair little chap with a thick head of hair falling over his shoulders, he had rosy cheeks, and abnormally round eyes whose innocent glance of appraisal could be quite terrible. He looked forward to the ministry, and we may suppose the Nietzsches implanting the seed of this desire to carry on the family tradition. They would enlarge on his father's merits, and hold them up as a model, so that little Fritz would admonish his sister to cultivate self-control, to endure sorrow and injustice with a cheerful smile. 'One of our aunts once said with quiet pride: "We Nietzsches scorn to lie!"' I wonder to whom this controlled remark was addressed.

Once the two children were taken to a parsonage on the Bohemian frontier. The hill upon which the church stood had ancient memories. On the site of the church there had been a sacrificial altar in olden time. One day Fritz led his sister up the hill where they silently sought and gathered some stones and bones which the rain had lately uncovered. They built a little altar like Abraham in the pictured family Bible, laid the bones on it, heaped wood over them, and set the whole mass on fire. The parson smelt something burning and rushed out, afraid for his church, only to find the children marching round and round the pyre with flaming pine torches, chanting in solemn tones: 'Odin, hear us!'

In those days a firm pact was sworn between the two children, and Lisbeth always rushed when summoned to her brother's defence. They used to pore over an old natural history together, and one day Fritz read aloud a description of the llama. 'The llama is an extraordinary animal; it cheerfully carries the heaviest burdens, but if it is forced or badly treated, it declines all nourishment, lies down in the dust, and dies.' Fritz laughingly told his sister that the cap fitted her exactly, and ever afterwards persisted in calling her 'The Llama.'

He took the leadership in their childish games. Lisbeth and he would escape from reality and live in an imaginary world ruled by a china squirrel called King Squirrel the First, as Emily Brontë and her sisters lived in Angora and Gondaland. Their kingdom also was menaced by wars, and lead soldiers went forth to battle and bravely fell. Later on, the scenes of warfare shifted to Troy, and gods took part in their battles. Nay, Fritz and his little friend Pinder even wrote a play, *The Gods of Olympus*, acted in it together, and called each other by various Hellenic names.

One day a tightrope walker came to Naumburg and stretched his cord across the village street. The sight of him balanced in air with serene unconcern made a great impression on Fritz, and in after years Zarathustra paused to watch him.

As soon as he was ten years old books and music began to form the centre of the boy's world. Pinder

was fond of poetry, Krug of music. The three were now inseparable companions. Fritz began to write verse. He was harsh with his own work and saved only the very best pieces. These he would copy out, and every year present his mother with a little collection of poems on her birthday.

While music and poetry began to colour his life, death began to free his mother from the Nietzsches. Aunt Augusta died in 1855, grandmother in the following year, missed by the children who often wept at her loss. This left Frau Nietzsche alone with Aunt Rosalie.

The moment long awaited had come at last. Mother could act, and Aunt Rosalie went to live elsewhere, 'as our dear mother, now in her thirtieth year, showed a determined wish to be left to her own resources at last, and to dispense with the exceedingly kind and well-meant guardianship of her elder sister-in-law.' The children, according to Nietzsche's sister, regretted their loss, but did they — really? It is mother's voice we hear in the words I have quoted. Perhaps Lisbeth stood by mother, and Fritz by Aunt Rosalie. So it would seem in the light of later events.

Mother now removed to a friend's house. She and her friend would enjoy talking over the past, and mother would be supported no doubt in the firm stand she had taken. In grandmother's house the children were kept indoors. The rooms were dark and the nursery unhealthy. Elisabeth thinks the old house was responsible for Nietzsche's defective sight as well as her own. Certainly it aggravated a tendency inherited

from their father and from grandmother Oehler, who had lost as a child the sight of one eye. Now the children had each a bright airy room — Fritz, a room with privacy — and both of them might play in the open air.

In 1857 Fritz complained of bad headaches, and at grandmother Oehler's suggestion a professor from Jena was called in. He found that one eye was weaker than the other. By his advice the boy was kept out of school for a few weeks and the headaches ceased. The ignorance of those days could do no more.

Just before these headaches a spiritual crisis occurred in his life which I cannot help suspecting marked a turning-point, and imprinted something permanent on all his future. We have very little information on the subject apart from certain guarded statements which he made himself in later years. 'When I was twelve,' he says, 'I saw God in his glory.' This is an extraordinary statement for such a man as Nietzsche to make in later life.

Now linked with this statement is another of strange implications: 'When I was young, I encountered a perilous godhead, and I had no desire to tell anyone what then blew across my soul — good things as well as evil things. Thus I learned to keep silence.' The second statement makes the first more precise, but we attain to certainty in a third statement made by Nietzsche in after years: 'When I was twelve I thought out all by myself a wonderful Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Devil. I reasoned that

God, mindful of Himself, created the Second Person of the Godhead; but that, in order that He might contemplate Himself, He had to contemplate His opposite, and thus create him. — So I began to be a philosopher.*

Now his mother had just won freedom from the Nietzsches, and Fritz was about to have his first bad nervous headaches and eye trouble. To have seen God in His glory implies exaltation. To have seen His antithesis and 'evil things' implies depression. The conflict between the two recurs ever after in Nietzsche's life, and this conflict feeds on a vision, which we shall recognize later as strife between Apollo and Dionysos. His sister tells us, moreover, that even as a child Nietzsche confessed to her that he had dreamed of Zarathustra.

For the present he turned from his vision to his studies, and to poetry and music with renewed ardour. Before he was fourteen he had written an introspective biography, and was offered a vacancy in the Landes-Schule at Pforta, which his mother promptly accepted on his behalf.

Now came the parting with Lisbeth, a gloomy sun-dering. Their mother found Fritz's pillow wet with tears every morning because he was leaving his sister. As he had left Röcken for Naumburg eight years and a half before, so now the boy of fourteen set out one October morning for Pforta with a heavy and brooding heart.

* See also Nietzsche's introduction to *The Genealogy of Morals*.

PFORTA was an ancient school of proud traditions. As Christ's Hospital has been the rough nurse of Lamb and Coleridge and Leigh Hunt, so Pforta once brought up men of the German romantic generation. Novalis, Fichte, the Schlegels, had all gone to Pforta School, and the foundation remembered them with staid and sober pride. Fritz, fresh from his first reading of Byron, was ripe for romanticism. Do you remember the terrible passage in *Ecce Homo*? 'I must have some profound relation to Byron's *Manfred*: for all the gloomy chasms in this work I found replicas in my own soul — when I was thirteen I was ready for this book. Words fail me, I can only look at those who presume to utter the name of *Faust* in *Manfred*'s presence.' Only the romantic mind longs to be possessed. The possessed are confirmed romantics, and in them the romantic seed is planted early. Koberstein, one of his teachers, would talk of Novalis and Fichte, and Fritz's eyes would kindle with enthusiasm.

On the 9th of November 1859 the school celebrated the centenary of Schiller. After Byron, Schiller became Fritz's hero now. *The Robbers* impressed him tremendously, as it had impressed young Coleridge at Cambridge, and he lived in imagination the lives of

these outlaws who fought against established power and the mob. These robbers are *supermen*, he says at the time. The memory lingers and a tone of joy comes into his voice thirteen years later as he speaks of the play in one of his lectures at Basel, reminding his hearers that a German Prince once said that 'had he been God, and had he foreseen the appearance of *The Robbers*, he would not have created the world.'

When the holidays came, he spent them with Grandfather Oehler, and read Novalis with avidity in his library, learning from him that the greatest activity is in every man's power, and that it is only inertia which checks the career of the hero. What Novalis wrote to compensate his weakness, Nietzsche absorbed to combat his own weakness. Thus fantasy repaid reality in both their minds. The formless cosmos of Emerson also attracted him and Fichte's vague and expansive idealism. 'Every ray of these heavenly bodies penetrates between him and what he touches.' Thus does Emerson warm the heart of the weak without exacting any arduous payment.

If the thoughts of Fritz wandered in golden cloud-land, the life at Pforta was severe and simple enough, so severe that the boy's physical troubles were neglected. All parental rights were surrendered to the school upon a boy's entry. Though Pforta was quite near Naumburg, Fritz might not go home. Food was coarse and plentiful, discipline watchful.

The boys rose at five in summer and six in winter. During the ensuing hour they went to chapel and

afterwards had some bread and milk. Five hours of study followed, and then a simple dinner. Then came an hour and a half of recreation, lessons from two to four, a light tea, and lessons until seven, supper, play afterwards, but no sports, and bed at nine, twelve boys in a dormitory ruled by a monitor. Never except on Sunday afternoons was the child alone for a moment, and this to a boy like Nietzsche who lived in day-dreams must have been torture indeed.

The rooms were dark by day and lit at night by smoky paraffin lamps. Fritz had headaches again, and was sent in his holidays to the Jena doctor, who gave him a letter to the school medical officer explaining that the boy's eye trouble was serious. The school doctor was furious at the implied reflection on Pforta, and for the rest of the boy's six years' stay at the school is supposed by Lisbeth to have consistently diagnosed Fritz's illnesses falsely.

Indigestion, mental confusion, headaches, romantic solitude, loneliness formed a philosopher. To all these were added the rationalism of the school. Once Fritz roused a storm at home under this influence when he recommended Strauss's *Life of Jesus* as a Christmas present for Lisbeth.

He was desperately homesick, especially for his sister. On Sunday afternoons he was free for two or three hours and would walk to an inn at Almrich, halfway toward Naumburg, for a few minutes' talk with Lisbeth, when he would confide to her all his sorrows and all his dreams. The school tradition

discouraged nostalgia, and Fritz sought to conceal his loneliness even from her, thus building up repressions which lasted through life.

He was loneliest in crowds: in company only when alone or with a friend, like all solitary boys brought up in a house of mourning women. In later years he confessed to his sister that his torture at Pforta was never to be alone. Even his thoughts had to follow a time-table. There was never a moment for the meditation which he craved. Is it strange that when freedom came, his repressed thoughts were guilty ones? Thought itself was a crime in the regimental life of the school.

But Fritz was proud and would shine, even by Pforta standards. One day he was talking with a group of younger boys, and one of them said that it was impossibly dreadful to burn one's hand like Mucius Scævola. Fritz asked gently: 'Why?' took some matches in his hand, lit them, and thrust his hand out straight without flinching. Yet young Scævola often tosses on his bed in the night, and the face of the absent Lisbeth haunts his dreams.

One night in the summer of 1859 he dreams that Grandfather Oehler's house is in ruins, and that Grandmother sits alone amid the debris. Shortly after, the old man falls ill and dies. It confirms the boy's belief in his dreams, and the repressions freed in his slumber will secretly guide his waking hours in future, mingling his outward life with aching day-dreams.

In 1859 he writes that he thirsts for knowledge and

universal culture. The bounds of the school curriculum already chafed him. Once he wrote in a school essay that when he looked into his heart he seemed to hear the roaring of wild contending forces, and a rustle in the air like an eagle flying toward the sun. This eagle will recur often in later life.

In the summer of 1860 he founded with Pinder and Krug a literary society which lasted for three years, and for this little club wrote many an essay on Byron, on Hölderlin, and even on the demoniacal element in music. There was a poem on Siegfried and a piece of music called *Pain is the Fundamental Feature of Nature*. The boys bought the piano score of *Tristan und Isolde*, which Fritz and Krug played from morning till night in the autumn holidays of 1862. Pinder and Krug had not gone to Pforta and the club met only when Fritz was on vacation.

That spring Fritz wrote a paper on *Fate and History* in the course of which he summarized his conflict: 'How often it has seemed to me that the whole of our philosophy is like the Tower of Babel; to storm heaven is the end of all high aspiration . . . An infinite confusion of ideas among the people is the unfortunate result: vast upheavals will happen in the future, as soon as the great mass of mankind realizes that the whole structure of Christianity is based on assumptions . . . I have tried to deny all things . . . Force of habit, the need to strive toward a noble goal, the breach with every existing institution, the crumbling of every form of society, the suspicion that we

may have been misled for two thousand years by an illusion, the consciousness of our own pride and audacity — all these elements fight a fierce battle within us, till painful experience and unhappy events lead us back at last to the old beliefs of our childhood.'

In other words, mother intervened. We know from his sister that Fritz began to feel very restless at Pforta early in 1862. It is clear to us that his restlessness began much earlier, but that he had concealed it so far from his sister and family. Aunt Rosalie said that it was all Shakespeare's fault: Lisbeth blamed Byron. No one thought of looking nearer home for the source of the trouble.

To the rationalism of Pforta, the romanticism of Schiller, bad eyesight, illness, and loneliness, was added adolescent ferment. It has not been noticed before that the gloom of 1862 coincides with the end of his weekly talks with Lisbeth. She was sent away to Dresden to complete her education, and Fritz saw her only once throughout that year.

Does the end of this restless period coincide with a happening of which we have only shadowy accounts? Nietzsche, who had a psychical inhibition against women all his life, is said to have formed his first Platonic attachment at this time. Going one evening to the house of some friends at Kosen, he met a girl named Anna Redtel with whom he fell in love. It was the ideal attachment of a Werther or an Adolphe. He sought to worship only from afar. What books might he lend her, what music play for her pleasure?

They played duets, and he wrote verses and music for her. Alas! the girl soon afterward disappeared.

We do not know the precise date of this idyll, but Lisbeth says that his reaction against Pforta was strongest in the first nine months of 1862. Apart from eye trouble and headaches, he had many colds and sore throats, and was unable to work as hard as usual. He formed a friendship with Garnier, a fellow-student, and together they wrote coarse obscenities, modelled as they supposed on Byron and Shakespeare, but soon Fritz reacted from these games in disgust. Garnier wrote afterwards that Nietzsche's deep-set eyes had a peculiar gleam. The masters thought that he regarded them ironically. In April, 1863, he got very drunk and wrote a morbid letter home next day. In May, his spirits revived and he began to make his plans for a University career. Andler points out that from now onwards Nietzsche pictures himself as Prometheus Bound, a man above morals who pays with his life for infringing life's decrees.

The lonely hero is now quite clearly declared, the Dark Hero, who lives above morals and who dares to be free. Ambition awakes, and Fritz applies himself with renewed zeal to his studies. His masters regard him once more as a model scholar. Gersdorff and Deussen are his preferred school friends to whom he confides his ambitions.

In April 1864 the school celebrated the tercentenary of Shakespeare's birth, and in the public exercises Fritz took the part of Percy Hotspur with

considerable acclaim. He read avidly every book he could find about the French Revolution, and sought for Byronic heroes in ancient Greece.

Now it was the custom for every departing student to write a Latin essay which was left behind as a gift of thanks to the school. At the suggestion of one of his tutors, Fritz chose as his subject the life of Theognis of Megara, and so followed the bent of his inclination. Theognis, it will be recalled, was a haughty aristocrat and an arrogant moralist. He contemned mob rule and loftily crushed it under foot, and Fritz's essay revealed his sympathy with the man. Theognis to him was the crown of an ideal society, and in this essay the main tendencies of Nietzsche's future thought are already clear.

Before leaving school he wrote a sketch of his life in which he said: 'Now that I am about to go to the University I consider the following rule for my further progress as absolutely binding: to resist my inclination towards the harmful acquisition of many subjects and also to encourage and develop my tendency to probe things to their uttermost depths and to trace them to their most distant causes. Should these tendencies seem to cross each other out, I should certainly have no objection in some cases, and now and then I see some effect of the sort in myself.' He also says: 'Of my earliest childhood I do not know much, and what little I have been told I have no wish to repeat.'

The time had come for his third significant journey. He left Pforta on the 7th of September 1864.

NIETZSCHE now spent some happy weeks at home with his friend Paul Deussen, and later at Deussen's home in Oberdreiss. Deussen and he entered the University of Bonn about the middle of October. During the holidays Nietzsche had been gay and rollicking. His pent-up spirits were discharged in all kinds of pranks.

Plunged into the extraordinary life of freedom of a German university student in those days, he now sought to drink the wine of life to the full. He joined the Franconia Club 'with joy and deliberation,' and surrendered himself for six months to student gaiety, apparently without the slightest pang. His guardian thought him extravagant. Nietzsche considered his allowance most insufficient. There was grumbling on both sides and a compromise. This little matter once settled, Nietzsche plunged into drinking bouts with his comrades, paraded, shouted, and sang.

One day after a party he wrote to Lisbeth with delicious absurdity: 'I am perfectly justified in saying with the highest consciousness that I have not got a thick head.' It was his ambition even to fight a duel, but he sought in vain for an enemy. Failing any other adversary he went one day to a friend: 'I'm a new student, and I ought to fight a duel. I rather like you. Let's fight!' His friend agreed, and Nietzsche was

slightly wounded. In later years, the philosopher was to refer to his year at Bonn as a dream framed by two periods of growth.

He had matriculated in theology and philosophy — in theology only to please his mother. The lectures of Ritschl and Jahn gave him pleasure, as well as the courses in history and art. He heard a great deal of music, and wrote some songs in the style of Schumann, and he took long walks with Deussen in which they discussed the future.

Now the reaction came and he turned solitary. His six months of jollity seemed to him entirely wasted. Did some special shock arrest him in his pleasure? I think we have the clue in a story told long afterwards by Deussen. Nietzsche, it seems, went off to Cologne one day and was shown the sights of the city by a servant. He asked the guide to direct him to a restaurant, but the servant took him to a brothel instead. Suddenly Nietzsche found that he was surrounded by half a dozen prostitutes in garments of gauze who looked at him with eyes of expectation. He stood bewildered before them for a moment, then rushed to the piano 'as to the only thing with a soul in the whole company,' he afterwards said to Deussen, and struck a few chords. Then he rushed out of doors in a sudden fury.

Was it after this episode, which appears to have strengthened the psychical inhibition of which we have spoken, that he undertook to reform the Franconia Club? Andler refers this impulse to a hypo-

chondriac need of domination, and this may well be true, but it was surely quickened by some actual experience. At any rate, he lectured his fellow members like a true German reformer, declaiming against their drunkenness and sexual irregularities.

We know his passion for self-control, his hunger to be complete master of himself, and a few years later he devoted nearly the whole series of his lectures *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions* to a furious indictment of German public schools for not preparing their students for the sudden freedom they would find when released into the Universities. Behind all this fury we may read between the lines a clear enough denunciation of Pforta.

Elsewhere he writes on the subject with perfect clarity. 'Here it was that I first came to realize to my own great surprise how very well instructed, yet how badly educated, a student from such a royal school is when he goes up to the University. He has thought out a good deal for himself and yet he lacks ability to express his thoughts. He has not yet felt the refining influence of women's companionship; he thinks that he knows life from books and from general report, yet everything seems strange and distasteful to him. That is how I felt at Bonn. The ways in which I tried to alter this unfortunate state of affairs were not all chosen as well as they might have been; and troublesome unpleasant intercourse and obligations which I undertook carelessly made my first year in the University a great burden to me.'

His pride in life, in other words, made him furious at his own lack of self-mastery. If he could not conquer himself, like Tolstoy, he would lecture others. Unfortunately his companions did not relish these angry adjurations delivered with all the arrogance of youth, and he found himself defeated and, as he thought, alone. In his bed at night he would lie nursing his wounds, galled and proud, a Dark Hero indeed condemned to solitude. Bonn was the prison of a noble Son of the Morning.

V I

NIETZSCHE's first six months at Bonn passed in idleness, but he had fallen under the influence of a strong personality and this influence was to prove decisive in its effect upon his future life. Ritschl, the famous philologist who lectured at Bonn, was an ardent and severe scholar with considerable personal charm. His spell seems to have attracted young Nietzsche at once, and to have aroused his ambitions. It will be remembered that the Pforta schoolboy used to lament the restless and dispersed nature of his thirst for knowledge. Under Ritschl's rapidly increasing influence, Nietzsche writes: 'I longed for a science which might be pursued with cold reflection, with logical coolness and unremitting labour, and *with results that would not affect my soul*. I thought I should find such a science in philology.'

I would have you note the words I have underlined, and compare them with Rohde's later description of Nietzsche as a student, in which he speaks of 'his outward and inner cleanliness, his austere chastity and his solemn demeanour.' Is there a clue in all this to his psychical inhibition against women? Did he fear that women 'would affect his soul?' Such a fear might have something to do with his sympathy for Schopenhauer.

At any rate he now wished to withdraw from life into the ivory tower of classical philology. We have seen how he conceived of his new mistress. But here a fresh conflict arose. He had entered into the theological classes to please his mother, who had destined him to the ministry from his birth. The rationalism of Pforta had mined his faith, but he was proud of the Nietzsches, and the Nietzsche pride was built on strong theological foundations, however Aunt Rosalie might deviate secretly from the fold.

Young Nietzsche took his difficulties to Ritschl for solution. In a single talk the eminent philologist pulled down the remaining pillars of the boy's temple. How could a philologist, pure scientist that he must be, investigate freely if hampered by tendencious faith? A half-hour's conversation sufficed to sever Fritz's last links with family tradition. For was not Ritschl a hero, the noblest man he had known, who fought continually against terrible physical and mental pain, whose courageous example revealed the truth of his words? Pforta was prison, and Nietzsche longed for freedom. Here was a free path at last. Freedom from school, from home, from God, from his fears and compulsions.

He went home to Naumburg at Easter an atheist, and upset his mother by refusing for the first time to go to Communion. There was a tearful scene, which Aunt Rosalie seems to have set right by saying that moments of doubt always came in the life of every great theologian.

Nietzsche's sister says that he appeared strong and self-reliant during these holidays, dark-skinned and erect in his bearing. The 'great theologian' was exactly the same height as Goethe, as they proved by the measurements in Goethe's house at Frankfort. Comparisons with Goethe in other respects were to be made, as we shall see when Nietzsche goes to Leipzig.

Religious discussions with mother engaged the vacation, in which Lisbeth seems to have sided with her brother. Strauss's *Life of Jesus* came into these quarrels. From then on, says Nietzsche's sister, their mother was obsessed with the idea that her two children were unduly idealistic and independent, and she sought continually to emphasize before them the practical side of life and to make them value other people's opinions. Fritz took refuge in silence and concealment. He did not wish to be rude, and it was rude to differ from one's elders' opinions in the Nietzsche family.

One day a fair was being held in the streets of Naumburg. A man was hawking balloons when a gust of wind came, and he had to struggle to keep the balloons from flying away! Nietzsche turned to his sister with a smile and exclaimed: 'Our dear mother.' Suddenly the wind tore some of the balloons from the man's hand, and Nietzsche shouted: 'That which would fly, flies indeed.'

And so the young man gave up the study of theology as soon as he returned to Bonn. Henceforth he was a

moralist, no longer a theologian. Lisbeth, left at home, was troubled with doubts, and wrote to her brother for advice in her religious troubles. The words of his reply reveal the road he had chosen: 'Here man comes to the cross-roads. Are you seeking spiritual peace and happiness? — Very well, then, believe! Are you anxious to follow truth? — Very well, then, investigate! But between the two main roads there are many turnings. What matters is what you specially desire.'

He therefore immerses himself in investigations. There are so many wasted months to be redeemed. He longs to create, but the springs of expression are dry. Prisoned in silence, his heart aches fiercely, and he plunges with Ritschl into philology, hoping that this new science will fill the void.

Commensurate with this passion, his censoriousness increases. His comrades avoid him. He goes for walks on the hills. He writes to a friend regretting that he has joined the Franconia. 'It made me violate my principle, never to conform to institutions or individuals longer than was necessary for me to discover what they were like.' This is not really the reason for his dissatisfaction. He does not reject the world first: the world rejects him. He has been cast out of men's Paradise as a scapegoat. The year has been wasted: And Ritschl is leaving Bonn where he is not sufficiently appreciated. Two years later Nietzsche confessed that he had been too timidly self-sufficient, and that he could not succeed in

'dominating' his environment. His nerves took their revenge in rheumatic pains.

That autumn he took his fourth eventful journey. He tells us that he left Bonn like a fugitive. 'The steamer came and carried me off. I lingered on the bridge in the wet reeking night, and as I watched the tiny lights along the river at Bonn disappear slowly, everything contributed to my impression of flight.'

VII

THE vacation was spent at home, and now that he had cast off Bonn for ever, his rheumatism and low spirits were rapidly cured. His mother still grieved over his religious apostasy, but that could be borne, for was he not going to Leipzig where Ritschl would be his parent and he Ritschl's loyal son?

His fifth fateful journey was therefore a hopeful one, and he reached Leipzig on the 17th of October 1865. Next day he announced his arrival to the Academic Board. Good omens attended him. Was he not of the same height as Goethe? A century ago that day Goethe had registered his name as a student at Leipzig. History was repeating itself, and his future was clear. He would learn of Ritschl how a great man should teach rather than acquire knowledge of books and science. Then the new Goethe would mount higher than all the crowd, and wresting God's fire from Heaven bestow it upon the ungrateful world beneath him.

What Nietzsche discerned in Ritschl was an exceptional personal force based on intellect rather than moral achievement. Such intellectual force in his own esteem far outweighed morality. Had not his own intellectual force cast religion behind him?

Ritschl's effect on Nietzsche was to strengthen his

own affirmations, to support his new freedom. But another force of greater power soon attracted him. As he said in his later days, atheism had led him to Schopenhauer. We read in an autobiographical fragment written shortly after the happening of which it speaks: 'One day I came across this book at old Rohn's second-hand shop, and picking it up with some hesitation I turned over its pages. I do not know what devil whispered to me: "Take this book home with you!" . . . When I got back to my room I threw myself on the sofa with my treasure-trove, and began to allow that forceful and gloomy genius to influence my mind. In this book, where every line shouted renunciation, self-denial and resignation, I perceived a mirror in which the whole world, life and my own mind were reflected with terrible grandeur. Here the full heavenly eye of art gazed upon me; I beheld illness and convalescence, banishment and shelter, Hell and Heaven. The necessity of self-knowledge, yes, even of self-devouring, possessed me forcibly. Traces of this sudden change are still to be found in the restless gloom of the pages of my diary at this time, with all their vain self-reproach and desperate staring upwards for recovery and for the renewal of the entire spirit of mankind.'

Mark the story well. He was walking alone when he stumbled upon a book. A demon whispered to him to carry it home. In its pages he saw the lonely hero mirrored, illness and health, banishment, Heaven and Hell. The demon who tempted him entered into his

heart, and the need of self-devouring forcibly possessed him, while he stared desperately upwards to the heights, and identified himself as a hero with all mankind. He was possessed for ever on the very eve of his manhood.

At twenty-one he had fallen into the abyss. The blood of the German reformers sang in its pride. His thirst for learning became a thirst for reform. He would remould the world in the image of the demon who possessed him, transpose all values, and marry Heaven to Hell. Heaven should be his bride, and he her master, and his demon should sit enthroned and crush the woman beneath his tyrannical heel.

Yet how he loved the heavens he would kill, how it would torture him to kill the thing he loved! He must harden himself as no man had been hardened before. Such a hardness was sacred, for was it not to storm Heaven's battlements, be victorious over the angels, and hurl Thor's battle-axe into God's own breast?

'By summoning all my qualities and aspirations before the bar of melancholy self-contempt,' he goes on to say, 'I became bitter, unjust, and immoderate in my self-hatred. I even practised bodily penance; for example, I compelled myself for a fortnight to retire at two o'clock in the morning and to rise punctually at six. I became a prey to nervous irritability, and who knows how far my folly would have led me if the very attractions of life itself, of vanity, and the discipline of regular studies, had not stood in my way?' So outraged nature sought to lure him back

to health, and demon and man battled in him for mastery. The outward strife was now between Ritschl and Schopenhauer.

In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche speaks of Raphael's *Transfiguration* as a painting symbolic of his own experience. 'The lower half, with the *possessed lad*,* the bearers in despair, terrified disciples, shows us the reflection of everlasting primordial suffering, the unique foundation of the world . . . Out of this appearance then rises . . . a visionary new world of appearances . . . a radiant gliding through the purest happiness and painless contemplation shining from wide-open eyes.'

Such a visionary new world swam into Nietzsche's ken on first opening Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea*. This world was the world of Apollo, and in his classical studies he fled to that world from the Furies, while he lectured on Theognis, the Hellenic aristocrat, to a philological club he had helped to found. He showed the manuscript of his lecture to Ritschl, who commended it warmly, and advised him to rewrite it as a book, which he did in the Easter holidays of 1866, during the fateful days of Sadowa. The professor's praise caught Nietzsche's self-love up into the clouds, and so began his real intimacy with Ritschl. He went to see him now every three or four days.

Ritschl could do much, but Schopenhauer could do more. In this unequal battle it was Schopenhauer

* Italics mine. Is there a recollection here of his father's funeral?

who prevailed, and Nietzsche, consumed by the new master who possessed him, sought for Nirvana in formlessness and the void. His sister tells us that Schopenhauer was not a book, but a friend, for him. All through his childhood and youth he had longed for a father, and his vision of Schopenhauer the man reflected his father's image. Six years before, Schopenhauer was living, and he might have gone to this father. The thought exalted him. Now Schopenhauer was dead. The thought depressed him. In the nervous crisis which ensued, that visionary figure like Virgil led him through the deep shades.

The world of Schopenhauer freezes men's hearts. In this icy Hell there dwells no ruling God. Far from God's face, it is ruled by unyielding laws, conditioned by time and space and eternal absence. A blind Will urges its beings into life, alien to reason, knowing no Providence. It feeds on itself and is eternally hungry, and agonizes alone in tortured desire. It ignores the men its hunger has forced into being, and progress is an illusion of these wretched atoms. Starving and senseless, it is the eternal idiot gibbering with horror under an empty throne.

So would Lucifer share with men his own anguish, draw them down to the pit to thaw his anguish, leave God alone deserted by men, Heaven empty, himself no longer the Lonely Hero, but triumphant to know that God's host should have forsworn Heaven.

In November and December of that year Nietzsche's letters home were full of his new prophet's pessimism.

ism and, like a true German reformer, he sought to convert his family to his views. Yet his sister would have us believe that the Christmas holidays were happy and that Friedrich had struck a truce for his Enemy's birthday.

When he returned to Leipzig he felt wholly free. The defeat at Bonn was now in the distant past. He was a force to be reckoned with at last, he could rule his environment, and loneliness was a trifling price to pay. Could he not feel free in the heart of the elements? At Easter he writes to Gersdorff as if he were Manfred: 'Yesterday an oppressive storm hung over the sky, and I hurried up a neighbouring hill called Leusch (perhaps you can explain the meaning of the word to me?). At the top I found a hut where a man was killing two kids while his son watched him. The storm broke with a tremendous crash, discharging thunder and hail, and I had an indescribable sense of well-being and zest . . . What mattered man with his restless will to me? What cared I for the everlasting "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not?" Lightning and tempest and hail are of a different world — free powers without morality! How happy and strong they are — pure will unhampered by the confusion of the intellect!' These were his thoughts on the hill of the Lion where Abraham had spared Isaac and sacrificed kids instead.

Alone with the dark elemental forces of Odin, he would march along his predestined road without fear. Why should he think of courage so much if it were not because of neurosis? Only a few months before he had

slunk away from Bonn with its intolerable recollections of defeat.

The neurotic has a compelling necessity which drives him to affirm with all the strength in his power the courage he really lacks. Power must be always for him a certitude. Philosophy must answer the needs of his heart. Schopenhauer teaches that the sick heart must be purified by suffering and renunciation. Knowing that all without and above is illusion, the purified heart which rejects all these illusions may fill the void with the content of its pure spirit, and so create its own destiny and values. These values and destiny are the only reality. Out of the purified self, the Lonely Hero, to whom his God and humanity must be phantom illusions, all cometh. The Hero only is the creator. When all men are heroes, then men shall be all as gods, and shall walk as kings in the world of their possession. Meanwhile the Hero may work to free mankind.

According to Schopenhauer, the road of annihilation leads to the palace of wisdom. Destroy by denial — for mere denial is sufficient — the world which has wounded us in our self-esteem, and we, the supermen dominating these pygmies, may forget our spleen and fulfil our secret ambition for which we have suffered so unjustly from God and man. Schopenhauer is our secret evasion of life, in whose thoughts we walk solitary among men and far above them. Unhappily our solitude creates a fierce hunger for friendships, a hunger for godlike equals to share our grandeur.

VIII

THE war which broke out between Prussia and Austria in 1865 made Nietzsche an enthusiastic Prussian. He volunteered twice for the army, but on each occasion was refused because of his very defective eyesight. His friend Gersdorff, now an officer at Spandau, was much in his thoughts, and after Sadowa, when the Prussian army seemed to him like the elemental storm of unmoral forces in which he had exulted, as we remember, he wrote to his friends: 'We must be proud that we have such an army and — *horribile dictu* — such a minister.' What would happen to Saxony? Young Treitschke and others called for its annexation to Prussia. Nietzsche was with them heart and soul for the survival of the fittest, the strongest, the Prussian soul. Nietzsche at the back of his mind foresaw the war with France. If Paris was the centre of Europe's gravity, to which Austria, once crushed, could always look for support, then France must be crushed in time for the good of Prussia.

Rejected from the army, he may have felt a sense of relief. At any rate he was happy enough during his second year at Leipzig. An ideal war, an ideal philosopher he had found, and now he worshipped from afar an ideal woman. His acquaintance with the

actress Hedwig Raabe was very slight, and the incidents of this acquaintance remain obscure, but he never missed a night at the theatre when she played at Leipzig in July 1866. He adored her as 'a fair angel', and Maximilian Harden afterwards said (quite truly, according to Nietzsche's sister) that she was the embodiment of the feminine ideal which Nietzsche admired all his life. His sister remembers his anger when someone expressed a doubt as to the purity of her life. The attachment, if merely Platonic, as we are told, must have been strong, for Hedwig Raabe is the only woman outside the family, whose photograph Frau Förster-Nietzsche has inserted in the biography of her brother, though other and more famous women played significant parts in his life.

That summer cholera broke out in the country, and in October Nietzsche fled to Kosen with his mother. From this time perhaps dates the philosopher's horror of illness. During the epidemic he believed that he had twice succumbed, and his sister tells us that he never forgot a night which he spent at this time in the same house with the corpse of a man who had died of cholera. He was to remember that night later on when he was an ambulance *aide* in the Franco-Prussian war.

Aunt Rosalie died in January 1867 and Nietzsche found her loss irreparable. Had she not stood between him and his mother, and kept the flame of the Nietzsche tradition burning? So he declared, and from this it seems clear that now he had cut all

family bonds, apart from his love for his sister. Aunt Rosalie left him a legacy large enough to give him some freedom in his choice of a vocation. Before her death, however, she had made him promise not to share his philosophical views with his sister until she was old enough to judge for herself.

He held to this promise, but suffered in the observance. To compensate, he and his new friend Rohde carved pentagrams on the trees, and shot at the symbol of God with alternate pistols. When Nietzsche wrote of this incident some years later, he transferred the scene to Bonn for some unknown reason.

That summer of 1867 he went on a holiday tour with Rohde, and afterwards spent some contented weeks at home. On the 30th of September he was informed that he must go through his military service. His defective eyesight would have exempted him, but unfortunately he had worn the wrong spectacles at the medical examination. He chose to serve in the Horse Artillery at Naumburg, a sufficient proof of his vigorous physical health.

Nietzsche's sister tells us that he found the contrast between the army and student life scarcely to be borne. Schopenhauer's gloomy philosophy proved serviceable. 'Sometimes,' he wrote to Rohde, 'when I am hidden under the belly of my horse I whisper, "Schopenhauer, help!" and when I return home worn out and streaming with perspiration . . ., I fling open the *Parerga*, which, like Byron, is more sympathetic than ever to me.' In other words he

turns from his failure as a horseman to gallop with Manfred in the dreamland of Lonely Heroes. Lisbeth fortunately was near enough at hand to console him at week-ends, for he needed someone to distract him from his sense of inferiority.

A letter to Rohde in February 1868 is significant enough. 'For a soldier the word "Saturday" is full of magic charm and has a sense of peace and quiet of which I had never dreamed as a student. To be able to sleep and dream peacefully, without having your soul haunted by the terrifying picture of the next morning . . . My present life . . . is very lonely and friendless. It offers me no stimulus that I do not provide myself . . . but rather self-estrangement of the soul, a weight of obsession, which screws the soul up tightly with a sense of fear, and teaches it to look at things more earnestly than they merit.'

Obsession — possession, what is the difference? In either case he was the prey of terrible fear. And always he plunged more deeply into Schopenhauer, whose picture stood on the centre of his writing-table.

He struggled fiercely to combine philosophical work with his army duties, but found it impossible. His officers praised his military zeal, the Leipzig authorities complimented him on his prize essay, *De Fontibus Laertii Diogenis*, but when Lisbeth returned home after a month's absence at the end of February, she found her brother utterly miserable. He could share his loneliness with his beloved sister, but not his

thoughts nor his dreams, for his promise to Aunt Rosalie bound him to silence.

One night the lieutenant of Nietzsche's company came to Lisbeth and her mother in great agitation, and told them that Nietzsche had fainted twice that day. They hurried home from the house of a friend with whom they had been spending the evening, and found him gravely ill. It seems that two days earlier he had failed to mount his horse which was very wild, and that his chest had struck the pommel of the horse's saddle very sharply. Although warned by a sharp pain in his side, he said nothing, and went on riding in agony for two days. Then he fainted at last, and the doctors discovered that he had torn two muscles in his chest. During the two days of subsequent riding all his muscles and tissues became inflamed, and very severe suppuration set in.

At first he seemed to improve rapidly, but when he had a relapse it was further discovered that the wounds could not close because the sternum as well had been grazed as he struck the saddle. Thereupon he was sent to Dr. Volkmann of Halle who at first feared that the suppuration had attacked the lungs, but after three weeks at the brine baths of Wittekind, the wound finally healed. He had suffered five months of anguish. Valetudinarian now, he gave himself injections of camomile tea and silver nitrate.

After his recovery he was not strong enough to continue his army service, and was accordingly discharged on the first of April. During these months

he was alone with himself and Schopenhauer, and the defeated warrior was lonely in his pride. He worked on an essay, *Teleology since Kant*. This was designed to be his doctor's thesis. His degree once taken, freedom would be won at last. He would be a *Privatdozent*, and expound his own views of life. He was even prepared to criticize Schopenhauer, if truth required it or the pride of his own heart. Schopenhauer was not a book but a friend, and friendship was holy, so holy, alas, that if Truth seemed counter to his friend, then friendship as an ideal demanded a sacrifice, and the friend whom Truth cast into shadow was immolated. So Schopenhauer was later to be banished, as his mother had been banished, and as all his friends were to be banished later on.

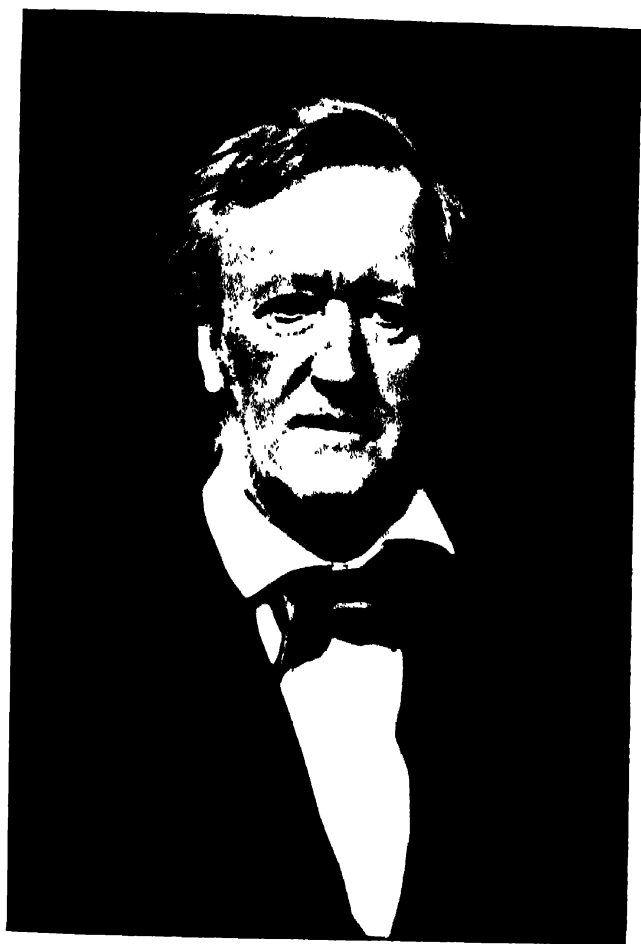
He returned to Leipzig that autumn a different man. Full of himself, he yet sought another hero. In November the hero came. He was Richard Wagner.

NIETZSCHE's love of music had returned and he went to concerts. He also frequented the home of Professor Brockhaus, whose wife was Wagner's sister. It will be recalled that as a boy he had been fond of *Tristan und Isolde*. Frau Brockhaus revived this passion, and in October we find Nietzsche writing to Rohde: 'I revel in Wagner much as I revel in Schopenhauer — the ethical atmosphere, the perfume of Faust, and also of the Cross — death and the tomb.'

That autumn Wagner had barely come into his fame. Frau Brockhaus must have been strongly impressed with a boy who had worshipped her brother in silence for so many years. On the 8th of November, Nietzsche found a card on his desk with the following lines written on it: 'If you would care to meet Richard Wagner, come to the Theatre Café at a quarter to four.'

Nietzsche's head was at once in a whirl. Wagner was staying incognito in Leipzig. Frau Ritschl had gone to Frau Brockhaus and met the master, who played her the *Meisterlied*, which she confessed she knew very well because Nietzsche often played it. The master was surprised and delighted. He must meet that young man.

Nietzsche rushed to the appointment and learned



Elliott & Fry

RICHARD WAGNER

that he was to meet Wagner in the evening. A tailor had promised to deliver a new evening suit that day. He went home to wait for the tailor, and the hours seemed endless, till at half-past six the bell rang and the tailor appeared. He tried on the suit and it fitted. The tailor presented his bill and claimed immediate payment. Nietzsche was haughty and had no money in his pocket. Clad only in his shirt, he fought for the clothes. The tailor won and made off with them, leaving Nietzsche disconsolate. Would his black coat serve for such a great man as Wagner?

He plucked up courage at last and strode off in the rain. Fortunately the Brockhaus party was far from formal. Nietzsche was introduced and timidly addressed some respectful words to the Master, who soon put him at his ease by enquiring how he had come to know his work so well. 'I succeeded in having quite a long conversation with him about Schopenhauer,' he tells Rohde. 'Oh, you can imagine how delightful it was for me to hear him speak with such inexpressible enthusiasm of our master — how much we owed to him, and how he was the only philosopher who had grasped the essence of music!'

Wagner laughed at professors and called them 'philosophical lackeys,' and read from his autobiography a satirical account of his own Leipzig student days. In parting they shook hands warmly, and Wagner invited Nietzsche to come and see him some day in Switzerland. Nietzsche left in a ferment, and poured out his heart to Rohde the following day.

So the third great influence on Nietzsche's life had come. First Greek philosophy, then Schopenhauer, now Wagner, and the last was the strongest and ultimately the most painful. Such will power, such charm, such genius was new to Nietzsche. It fascinated him and drew him into its torrent. Here was a master to serve who was a friend indeed. Did Nietzsche foresee the call of a great new destiny which would lead his steps further than Schopenhauer had trod?

This was better than philology, and to greater purpose. He at once confides to Rohde that the philologists are narrow, that they will attack such a genius, and that he foresees persecution. And to Gersdorff and Rohde and Romundt, another comrade, he proposes a holiday trip. 'Let us go off to Paris together and spend a winter there: let us forget our scholarship: let us shed our pedantry; let us get acquainted with the *divin cancan*, the green absinthe: we shall drink of it; let us go off to Paris and live *en camarades*, and, parading the boulevards, let us represent Germanism and Schopenhauer there . . .; after a year and a half or two years, we shall come back and pass our examinations.'

That autumn Lisbeth began to read Schopenhauer secretly to find out what really passed in the mind of her hero. She found in him an ideal of self-sacrifice which fitted in well with her secret sentimental ambitions. She would be a llama indeed, if a Christian llama. How noble it would be to devote her life to her brother!

He came home to Naumburg for Christmas, and brother and sister had a very happy time. Now they could talk of Schopenhauer together, and of the new German hero Wagner who was Nietzsche's friend. So the days passed in a golden dream of the future till Friedrich was suddenly called to Leipzig on a mysterious errand.

He returned in the evening with shining eyes, but said nothing. Whenever the Paris trip was mentioned, he sighed, and would only say cryptically enough: 'Oh, Lisbeth, really life is hard!' His sister was puzzled, and wondered whether he was not deeply in love and had not 'met with difficulties about the betrothal.' He returned to Leipzig without revealing his secret, and it was not till the second day of February, his mother's birthday, that he confided to his sister at last under pledge of secrecy that he was to be Professor at the University of Basel.

It seems that Vischer, who was President of the Board at Basel, had read certain philological papers which Nietzsche had contributed with Ritschl's encouragement to the *Rheinisches Museum*. Vischer had asked Ritschl questions about this promising young man, and Ritschl had warmly recommended him for the post.

On the 4th of February, the news of the appointment was confirmed, and Nietzsche's mother was overjoyed. 'What difference does it make?' said Nietzsche scornfully: 'There will only be one more schoolmaster on earth!'

Nietzsche was now twenty-four, and in the eyes of his family his future was already assured. Young professors in novels were always noble and secretly beloved by high well-born heroines. Leipzig hastened to give him his doctor's degree at once without examination or thesis. The dream of Paris was over, but he would be in Switzerland near Wagner, and if slavery was the price, the reward was sufficient. At least, such was his impulse, and he set to work with his sister to repay Ritschl by indexing the *Rheinisches Museum*.

More sober thought followed. He feared the narrow path which opened before him, the path which led straight to philology and no further, and in cold resignation he remembered Schopenhauer. In March he wrote in his private diary: 'I shall not say that I am merely and only one of those "resigned" philologists, but when I recall the manner in which I was led from art to philosophy, and from philosophy to science, and then again to this much narrower territory, it almost appears to me an act of deliberate renunciation.'

So far in Nietzsche's life we see no signs of that *amor fati* of which he was to boast proudly. Is it not clear enough that, far from loving his fate, he surrendered to every influence without hesitation only to abjure it afterward? We shall see later on how he abjured philology, Schopenhauer, even Richard Wagner. Yet each of these seemed a fate to him. For 'love' we should always read 'hunger'. Even so Satan hungers for God, but does not love him. Nietzsche always

kills what he loves, and is then left hungry. For *amor fati* he substitutes *amor abyssi*.

He went to Basel like a young Prometheus Bound. On the eve of his departure he wrote to Gersdorff: 'My hour has struck. Early to-morrow morning I am going out into the wide world, to enter a new untried profession, in an atmosphere heavy and oppressive with duty and toil . . . The only question I ask is whether the chains are of iron or of pack-thread? For I have the courage which will make it possible for me perhaps to burst my fetters some day and venture forth into this precarious life from a different direction and in a different manner . . . May Zeus and all the Muses guard me from ever becoming a Philistine, an *ἄνθρωπος ἄμουςος*, a herd-man.'

To Deussen he also wrote announcing his new appointment in grandiose terms as if destiny had taken him into his charge. Deussen replied with hearty congratulations, lamenting however his own less settled fortunes. Nietzsche wrote back violently, breaking their friendship. 'At that moment,' Deussen wrote afterwards, 'he was not a great man.'

On the 13th of April, 1869, he set out on his sixth fateful journey, a student no longer, but a man on the threshold of the world. He had taken care in his painful self-consciousness to have special clothing made so that he might seem more elderly, and so this journey too was tinged with fear.

NIETZSCHE was restless and uneasy on the journey. Halting at Cologne, Bonn, Wiesbaden, Heidelberg, and Karlsruhe, he sought excuses for postponing his arrival at Basel, and it was not till a week had passed that he reached Switzerland.

He was haunted by the looming prospect of his inaugural address. What impression was he going to make in academic circles? Would he seem sufficiently mature to justify his appointment as a professor? Would he win friends and comrades, or would he be condemned to loneliness? On the flyleaf of the address as he published it were the lines:

‘In Basel I stand, nor fear, nor faint,
But lonely — God may hear my plaint.’

He had six weeks in which to prepare his lecture, and it made a good impression on his worthy colleagues when he finally delivered it on the 28th of May in a crowded auditorium. As his listeners streamed out of the hall, there was an animated murmur of discussion and there were many words of praise for the young professor. Nietzsche felt that his words had been spoken to good effect and was correspondingly reassured for the moment.

When his university teaching began, however, he

was slightly disillusioned. Only eight students had put down their names for the philological course. He comforted himself with the thought that they seemed intelligent, and that his daily lecture would provide him with a regular intellectual discipline of which he stood much in need.

Meanwhile he found it difficult to make new friends, and complained of his solitude. He believed that he was entirely abandoned, and that there was no one with whom he could share his thoughts and ambitions. His colleagues, to be sure, were ready to welcome him. Why did he refuse all their well-meant invitations? He felt inferior to them and compensated himself by scornfully alluding to the petty triviality of their minds.

With Nietzsche friendship had to be all or nothing. There must be complete surrender on both sides. He would give up everything to a friend, but a friend must give up everything to him, and friendship was something which could never be shared with outsiders. Who was worthy of his friendship? To whom could he surrender? Not far away to the south lived Richard Wagner.

Tribschen lies a mile and a half from Lucerne on the lake at the foot of Pilatus. A fortnight before Nietzsche gave his inaugural address, he found himself in Lucerne debating whether or not he had courage enough to avail himself of the invitation which Wagner had issued at Leipzig. He was not alone, but with company to fortify him. Hesitantly he guided his

steps toward the little promontory of Tribschen. He stood in front of the house for a little while, listening to sounds of mournful music within. At length he timidly rang the bell at the gate. A maid came out and informed him that the Master was at work and could not be disturbed before two o'clock. He sent in his card, and was invited to luncheon. Alas! the friends whom he had brought along to support him were awaiting him at Tell's Chapel. He was compelled to refuse the invitation, which was renewed for the following Monday. On the 17th of May, after a restless week-end, he entered the doors of Tribschen for the first time.

The lonely villa stands half hidden in high poplars on a little peninsula on the shore of the quiet lake. There all is still as a dream even to-day. Böcklin's well-known painting, *The Isle of the Dead*, was inspired by the spot, which is not altered now in the slightest degree. Here Wagner had retired with Cosima von Bülow from life's storms, and was wrapped in his work on the *Ring*. He was fifty-nine, and Nietzsche was twenty-four. Cosima was then barely thirty, and had the noble statuesque face of her father Franz Liszt.

Nietzsche, a youthful Parsifal, brought up by a widowed mother, shy, hesitant, and nervous, with gleaming eyes in a smouldering youthful face, came to Tribschen seeking the Holy Grail. Cosima was not so much older in years, but she had lived through more than one lifetime of experience. Separated from

Hans von Bülow, a noble musician whose heart she had reluctantly broken, she had lived for two years with Wagner, and served the Grail as she knew it with all her heart. There was sorcery in her servitude, the sorcery of Kundry, and she had nothing to offer Parsifal but her sorcery which served her Master only to his own ends. The Master was as old as their parents and revered as a parent. He served the Grail as high priest, and Cosima and Nietzsche were expected to aid him by pledging their lives to his service. Woe unto him if he failed in the eyes of his servants. One of these servants was soon to be his judge.

On this day Wagner and Cosima spoke of the Grail and laid a heavy burden on Parsifal's shoulders. They enrolled, in fact, a new servant of the Grail. The talk flowed freely in an atmosphere of exaltation. The wine of their thoughts and feelings was heady and new. The night was glorious and Wagner walked home with Nietzsche, who joyously hearkened to all the Master's dreams. He had found the friend with whom he could share his ambitions, the fellow-crusader who had fought for his own ideals for a generation, and whom it would be a proud privilege to serve. And Wagner, too, was joyous and exalted. They parted at Nietzsche's inn, and the young man wrote to a friend that he felt as if in his presence he were in direct contact with the divinity.

Three days later came a note from Cosima inviting him to Tribschen for the Master's birthday. It was on

the eve of Nietzsche's inaugural address, and he was compelled to decline. He replied to Wagner, instead of to Cosima, saying how glad he would have been to come had not the claims of his duties tied him to his 'Basel dog-kennel.'

The invitation was warmly renewed by Wagner himself for the week-end of the 5th of June and Nietzsche slept that night for the first time in Tribtschen. The eager exchange of views and ambitions was renewed. Wagner and Nietzsche sat up late talking, and we must assume that Cosima's ultimate departure from the room on the Sunday evening passed unobserved. Early on Monday morning Nietzsche was obliged to return to Basel. Some time later the news reached him that during the night a son had been born to Wagner and Cosima. I suppose no greater example of artistic detachment has ever been recorded. While the child was born, the orchestra of conversation played on. He was christened Siegfried. Two months later Wagner completed triumphantly his opera of the same name.

It was about this time that Wagner showed Nietzsche the manuscript of a treatise *On the State and Religion* which he had written for the benefit of his patron, the mad King Ludwig of Bavaria. Coming to Nietzsche, as it did, soon after his acquaintance with Schopenhauer, it contributed powerfully to the shaping of his own philosophy. What he owed to Wagner in this respect must be strongly emphasized, as it is usually deliberately overlooked.

In this treatise Wagner tells the King how the failure of the Revolution in 1848 led him to perceive that the great mass of men can only be rendered happy by illusion. Incapable of reaching noble ends directly by their own efforts, they must be led to support the culture of their superiors by the inculcation in their hearts of two great illusions. The illusion of patriotism will make them support the State; the illusion of religion will make them support the misery of their own existence.

The superior man, the King, penetrates both illusions. He perceives the naked tragic grandeur of life, and 'finds himself almost daily in the same state which makes the common man despair of life and turn his thoughts to suicide.' Courage sustains the superior man, but even he must turn his back on the world. And to him alone comes art as a liberator, offering him a new creative illusion which he alone is worthy to share with the artist. 'Art makes life appear like a game; it withdraws us from the common fate; it delights us and offers us consolation.'

How keenly Nietzsche responded to this flattering doctrine may be readily imagined. Had he not felt from his childhood that he too was kingly, and had not his royalty suffered in heroic loneliness? What comfort this doctrine must have offered him! And how noble the Master must be who had thus, like Schopenhauer, pierced the veil of illusion, and now in lonely exile was devoting his life in eager self-sacrifice to the high cause of art at the heaviest cost to himself! Here is the

genius, as Schopenhauer himself described him, the essential disinherited tragic man from whom all greatness is born and who claims no reward.

Nietzsche wrote to his friend Rohde in exalted language: 'What I am learning and what I behold, what I comprehend and what now dawns on my intelligence defies all description. Schopenhauer and Goethe, Æschylus and Pindar — believe me, they yet live.' He is proud for his new friend with the pride of an equal. Two lonely Dark Heroes who meet in the night will join their forces and conquer the world of light.

Week-end visits to Tribschen followed at frequent intervals, and Nietzsche found himself accepted at once on an intimate family footing. That Wagner regarded him more as a son than a brother was very natural, for Nietzsche sought a father to take the place of the one he had scarcely known.

The other friend whom he made at this time in Basel, Jakob Burckhardt, was also his elder by twenty-six years. The support of this older man, whose views on Greek culture so powerfully influenced his own, was necessary to his existence in Basel, and after their lectures the two men would wander up and down the cathedral cloisters exchanging views on æsthetic as well as philosophic problems.

As a teacher it is clear that Nietzsche was respected by his pupils. They found that he assumed on their part a philosophical training which they did not possess, but he inspired them with courage and



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taught them to think independently, and he was indulgent when he found that he had been overtaxing them. While he never uttered a word of blame or vexation, he would fix a culprit with his gleaming eyes and stand silent till his victim wished that he could sink into the floor. His lectures on classical philology dealt with Æschylus and the Greek lyric poets, and, preoccupied as his mind was with his new hero, he found himself continually discussing with his pupils the relationship between music and tragedy. As he said proudly enough at this time, he seized the opportunity which offered to 'contaminate his pupils with philosophy.'

That summer Wagner was anxious that Nietzsche should spend most of his long holidays at Tribschen. The fascination of the spot to Nietzsche was very great. As he wrote to Rohde, who was in Rome, 'I also have my Italy, but I can only visit it on Saturdays and Sundays. My Italy is Tribschen, and already it seems to me as if it were my home.' Why therefore did he decline Wagner's warm invitation, heartily seconded as it was by Cosima and the children? We have no clear knowledge of the reason, and it is certain that Wagner was vexed by Nietzsche's decision. He paid one or two short visits to Tribschen, however, climbed Mount Pilatus, and divided his time between Interlaken and Badenweiler.

The following academic year was a busy one, interspersed by frequent visits to Wagner and Cosima. He began to find himself more and more at home in

Basel as the year wore on, though he still complained of inadequate comradeship. His mind was actively hatching new thoughts in which philology and music were strangely mingled. He brooded upon ancient Greece and the spirit of tragedy, and it seemed to him that he found the same spirit incarnate in Richard Wagner. Both willed to recreate the spirit of man by evoking new noble myths. To both the spirit of the mob was definitely hostile. 'Will the art of Wagner, like that of Æschylus, go down to defeat?' asked Nietzsche in a letter to Gersdorff.

He urged Wagner to renew the Greek idea. 'The Greeks believed, as we men of Europe do now, in the fatality of natural forces. They believed furthermore that man must himself create his own virtues and his own gods. Imbued with a tragic sense, a courageous pessimism, they never turned away from life. There is an exact parallel between them and ourselves; pessimism and courage, and the will to create a new beauty.'

Wagner was interested and flattered by these ideas. There was much more than a subtle incense of compliment in them. They implied that Wagner was a great heroic figure, an Æschylean Prometheus who agonized while he stole fire from heaven for man. Wagner showed him the manuscript of his autobiography, and asked Nietzsche to have it secretly printed in a limited edition of twelve copies. He was invited to assist the Master's work in many other ways. Even Cosima set him many little tasks.

Would he buy little angels and devils in Basel for the children's Christmas party? Would he purchase the Christmas presents as well for Tribschen? She would not dare ask the Professor of Philology, but might she not ask a charming young man of twenty-five? They would keep it all as a secret from the Master.

And so the Christmas holidays came, and Nietzsche spent them at Tribschen. Cosima presented him with a volume of Montaigne. In February, Nietzsche sent Wagner and Cosima the manuscripts of his lectures on *The Greek Musical Drama* and *Socrates and Greek Tragedy*. They roused warm interest and considerable dismay. This ardent disciple showed dangerous signs of independent and, to their minds, unbalanced thinking. He said that Socrates had destroyed Greek tragedy, and that its decadence began with Æschylus and Sophocles. Cosima and Wagner had been reading Plato that winter, and now these discourses informed them that Socratic logic and morality had killed Greek drama, and that Plato was the 'pathological' sequel of it all.

Wagner had read the lecture on *Socrates and Tragedy* aloud to Cosima, who became very much agitated, or so he said. He wrote back hastily to Nietzsche: 'Even those who have been initiated into *my* ideas will certainly be alarmed when they discover that yours conflict with their rooted belief in Socrates and even in Æschylus.' He affirms that Nietzsche is right but goes on to say that he is very anxious over the security

of the young professor's future career, and advises him to use more caution in future and not to express his views in such direct forcible language.

Cosima also hastened to write in much more guarded words and her letter ended with consummate flattery. 'Though your assurance really terrified me at first, it now seems extremely satisfying, as I perceive in it the pregnant impression of power. Those distant geniuses whom I used always to approach with reverence and awe, and to whose utterances I had hearkened as to the speech of prophets and high priests, all at once became individuals, and the mighty portent of Greek art stood up before me in all the towering height of its tragedy.'

It would be of the highest significance to read Nietzsche's reply to these two agitated but purposeful letters. Unfortunately, we are told that Cosima destroyed this among other letters. The missing correspondence may yet come to light, as there is reason to doubt the accuracy of this statement. Nietzsche's letters to Cosima appear to have been used recently—in fact, by Count Du Moulin-Eckart in his life of Cosima Wagner. The published texts of Cosima's letters to Nietzsche are sadly mutilated.

We have Wagner's reply to the missing letter. He proposes to Nietzsche a partnership in labour in which the young man is to be subordinate to the Master. 'Now you have a chance to show the usefulness of philology, by assisting me to achieve the great renaissance wherein Plato will embrace Homer, and Homer,

full of Plato's spirit, will become more than ever the utterly supreme Homer.' Nietzsche's reply to this extraordinary letter is also missing.

Clearly there was already a great misunderstanding between the two men which neither realized. The capacity of both for enthusiasm was so great that it fogged their judgment.

Meanwhile life at Basel was very dull. To Nietzsche it seemed that his professorship was involving him in a cruel life of bondage. Ritschl encouraged and so far approved of his work. He longed for Rohde to talk philology with him. Rohde had charm and an affectionate manner, as we may readily see from his letters to Nietzsche. It may be remarked in passing that they have been published with many curious omissions whenever they reach a sentimental affectionate point. In January 1870 Nietzsche cried out to him: 'I implore you, as a sick man implores . . . Come to Basel!'

In April Nietzsche was made full professor at Basel. He was not yet twenty-five years of age, and the appointment caused great excitement in academic circles. There was even some talk of a call to a German university. Nietzsche had other views. He had entered so much into Wagner's troubles in the spring that he nearly decided to give up teaching altogether and devote his life to creating the future with Wagner. We may suppose that this would have implied permanent residence at Tribschen in close proximity to Cosima, 'the Unique'.

Wagner opposed this resolution, Nietzsche's sister suggests, because he regarded a supporter with university prestige as desirable. It seems more likely that Wagner had other reasons. Nietzsche was urging Wagner to share his own task, to which Wagner had replied naturally enough that he had no time. Cosima, 'the Unique', was dedicated to the cause of the future, and to Wagner the future was synonymous with worship of himself. He would not have this worship compromised by rivals, however devoted to his own genius they might seem to be.

That spring Nietzsche's mother and sister visited him, and they went to Clarens for a time, the scene of Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*. When Nietzsche returned, Wagner was surprised at his unusual cheerfulness, and asked him the reason of it. He is said to have replied: 'It is because of my sister's company, as she has something exhilarating about her which reconciles a man to the world.'

Wagner's birthday came round once more, but Nietzsche did not attend the festivities. He sent to Tribschen instead twelve flowering rose-bushes with a warm letter of utter apostolic devotion. 'If it is true, as you once wrote to me (and how proud I was!), that my life is conducted by music, then you, and no other man, are the conductor of that music.' Yet clearly there is 'constraint on both sides, a constraint which would seem to have no relation to art.

Wagner did not acknowledge the gift for a fortnight, and then wrote giving Nietzsche a small commission

on his behalf, and saying that he hoped his friend would be custodian of his memoirs after his death. One is lost in wonder conjecturing why Cosima was not considered a more suitable executor.

Soon after a later visit of Nietzsche to Tribschen, when Rohde had accompanied him to worship at the shrine, Cosima wrote him an extremely warm letter in the course of which she prophesied: 'You will write your book in Bayreuth and we shall try hard to do it credit,' the precise meaning of which behind all the flattery seems to be that Bayreuth and Wagner's music will be the living book which will justify Nietzsche's existence. Cosima's gifts of sympathy to Nietzsche were always designed to assist the apotheosis of Wagner. What did she really think of the gift Nietzsche had left on his last visit — a print of Dürer's *Melancholy*? Her comment on it in this letter seems frank enough. 'Dürer seems to me not a beginning, but an end.'

Nietzsche's mother was called back to Germany by family illness toward the end of June, and Nietzsche earnestly begged his sister to remain with him. Apparently he felt the need of protection. Had he made a rash promise to Cosima, as her letter seems to hint? Repeated invitations came from Tribschen, but Nietzsche had sprained his ankle, which served as a good excuse for his absence. At length he took his sister to Tribschen, and all was well.

Then came a thunderclap. On the 14th of July, Nietzsche sat in Basel, writing complacently to Rohde,

and telling him of Cosima's complimentary opinion of him, when his letter was suddenly interrupted. A blank line ensues. Then the letter begins again: 'Here is a terrible thunderbolt: the Franco-German war is declared, and a frightful demon descends on the whole of our threadbare culture. What shall we live through? Friend, dearest friend, we met one another again in the twilight of tranquillity. Now we may be at the beginning of the end! What a desert! We shall need cloisters again. And we shall be the first brethren.'

ALL was confusion and agitation in Basel. Streams of French and German travellers poured into the city seeking trains to carry them home to their regiments. The contagion of all this excitement made Nietzsche restless. He wrote home to his mother: 'How happily we were living in the twilight glow of peace! And now the dreadful thundercloud has burst. Now I am sorry that I am a Swiss. Our very culture is involved in this, and no sacrifice can be too great to preserve it.'

Switzerland was neutral, and Nietzsche was now a Swiss citizen. He ate his heart out walking with his sister in the mountains, and writing for such consolation as it afforded an essay on *The Dionysian Outlook on the World*. He returned to Basel and pleaded with the Board of Education for his release. 'Although I am quite aware of the lofty nature of the duty lying before me at Basel, I am faced with Germany's terrible cry that every man ought to do his *German* duty.'

The authorities refused to permit him to go as a combatant, but gave him leave to serve in a German ambulance corps. He reached Erlangen on the 13th of August. After two weeks of intensive training as a Red Cross *aide*, he was qualified, and the German authorities sent him to the battlefields at the head of an ambulance corps.

He saw the terrible field of the battle of Wörth which stank like a charnel-house. In the Alsatian villages near the German front line he collected the wounded and sent them back to the rear. Far off on the skyline flared the bombarded city of Strasbourg. By Lunéville and Nancy he drew nearer and nearer toward Metz, and found the country behind the German lines a vast hospital full of wounded men dying from their wounds and from the infectious diseases which spread every day more and more rapidly.

From ambulance to ambulance across the battle-fields he sped under a hail of bullets, giving aid to the wounded and taking the last messages of the dying. He was kind and brave, but exalted with a strange horror as if life were driven by an inexplicable doom. In later life he aimed to be a 'Good European', but at this moment he was pure German with the passionate ancestral feeling of the ancient worshippers of Thor and Odin. His experiences at this time were ineffaceable, and lent colour and tone to all his future life and thought.

Under the walls of Metz his mind was active, and he brooded over the problem of will and tragedy. In these tormented days the ideas germinated which flowered in *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Will to Power*. In the years that immediately followed his war experience, he would tell his sister that he could not speak of his memories, that it was a man's imperative duty to banish such terrible thoughts from his mind; but one day, many years after, he lifted the veil.

On the evening of one dreadful day, he told his sister, when his heart was nearly broken with pity for the agonized wounded whom he had been tending, he found himself entering a little town on the chief military road. There was a high stone wall on one side and, as he turned the corner, all at once he heard a roaring thunderous noise. Then a noble cavalry regiment, brave and strong, hurled by with a thunder of hoofs, and in a moment was gone. Still thunder echoed behind him, drawing nearer and nearer, and all at once his old regiment swept by. He longed to jump on a horse and dash on with them to the same heady music, on to battle and death and complete surrender, but instead he stood silent crouched against the stone wall.

‘And then,’ said he to his sister, ‘I felt for the first time in my life that the strongest and noblest Will to Life does not reside in our puny struggle to exist, but in the Will to War, the Will to Power, the Will to Superpower!’ And he added that he was glad that Wotan fixed stone hearts in the breasts of all great commanders, so that they felt no horror at sending myriads to their death for the sake of dominion.

This vision of life on the battlefield never left him, however he sought to banish it, this vision in which his own comrades, the men of his race, went forth in their pride to conquer or to die. Impulse for once was superimposed on ideal — to die for the highest aim was the highest duty — and, Prometheus as he felt himself to be in all his faculties, that highest aim was

no other than the Will to Power. He had been weak in his regiment, and now he was weak on the battle-field, and he paid for his weakness with splendid dreams of triumph.

Other thoughts must have come to him in the midst of his weakness. During these very days 'the Unique' had married 'the Master'. Cosima and Wagner were united in fast-sealed vows. Wagner had been stronger than Hans von Bülow (to whom Cosima had borne four children), strong enough in fact to steal Ariadne from Theseus, as Bülow himself expressed it. Was not Ariadne the reward of the Will to Power? Often at Tribschen in the presence of Cosima, Wagner would launch forth in ribald ridicule of Nietzsche's chastity, and allude to his own relations with Cosima in a way which Nietzsche found very painful indeed. Which had the stronger Will to Power, Nietzsche or the Master? Weeds of criticism began to rankle in Nietzsche's heart.

The strain of these thoughts superimposed on 'the strain of his hospital duties imposed too severe a burden on Nietzsche's health. His physique had been superb since the days of his boyhood, according to his sister, but this we may take good leave to doubt. Apart from his grave illness during his first military training and his great short-sightedness, there are too many signs of neurosis throughout his adolescence and young manhood to warrant us in accepting his sister's statement without reserve.

Now he found himself in a cattle-van flooded with

water, accompanying six wounded men, two of whom were suffering from hospital gangrene and diphtheria. He was the only man on whom they depended for comfort for three reeking days and nights. After he had turned them over at last to the hospital at Karlsruhe, he began to realize that he was very ill. By a supreme effort of will he forced his body to travel back to Erlangen, where it was his duty to report to his superiors. Then he collapsed and was put to bed with dysentery and diphtheria.

His recovery was very slow and left him so weakened as to bar out the possibility of any further war service. Moreover the strong doses of opium and other powerful drugs which were administered to him in hospital ruined his digestion in a manner from which he never recovered again in later life. He had learned in the field ambulance to administer drugs to himself, and it is clear that from now on he badly abused them.

After a week in Erlangen he went home to be nursed by his family in Naumburg, and by the end of October found himself back in Basel, weak in body but resolute in mind. At Naumburg he had seen the pettier side of German national feeling, smug bourgeois satisfaction, and stupid complacency. He kept his thoughts to himself for a little while but finally wrote to his sister in early December: 'Little by little I am beginning to lose all sympathy for Germany's present war of conquest. The future of German culture is in greater danger now than it ever was.' To

Gersdorff he added: 'In my opinion modern Prussia is a force of the greatest danger to culture.'

Meanwhile Wagner had reminded the German race that in the tumult of conquest they had forgotten the centenary of a very great German hero, Ludwig von Beethoven. 'Germans, you are courageous!' he cried; 'remain courageous in peace. He who gives joy to the world is a loftier man than he who conquers the world.'

WE are now on the eve of Nietzsche's first passionate book, *The Birth of Tragedy*. It behoves us at this point to look backward and forward some little way.

First of all, let us recall that Nietzsche at this time recognized only two great heroes, Wagner, 'the Master,' and Cosima, 'the Unique'. These two, until the time of Nietzsche's departure for the battlefields, had lived together unsanctioned in irregular wedlock. To Nietzsche this was painful, especially after the birth of Siegfried. The Lutheran heritage of his fathers protested against it. He concealed the facts as long as he could from his family, yet loathed the necessity for concealment, while clinging at the same time to the idea that those of a higher race should create their own morality.

Cosima, moreover, was the ideal woman of his youthful imagination, the heroic mortal who had sacrificed all for love of art and for the furtherance of the noblest ideals. Her justification for ruining the life of her husband, Hans von Bülow, could only be that she was following a higher morality which counselled her to sacrifice the weaker for the stronger vessel of art. Wagner was stronger than Hans von Bülow and Cosima was necessary to the full flowering of his triumphant genius.

But Nietzsche also loved Cosima to the end. His last words before he was taken to the asylum were addressed to her, and they voiced the thwarted love of a passionate lifetime. If heroic strength were the price of such a prize, might not he prove more heroic than Richard Wagner? This thought unspoken, and no doubt very dim, began to gleam in his mind and to smoulder in his eyes. Wagner would boast to him coarsely of his life with Cosima, linking his boast with taunts at Nietzsche's purity. Was this the act of a hero? Was it worthy of Cosima? And what was morality, and what were its dictates?

Conventional morality demanded that Wagner should marry Siegfried's mother. To Dionysian morality such a course seemed directly opposed. Marry her Wagner did on the 25th of August. Next day Nietzsche left Erlangen for the battle-fields. The formalities attendant on Cosima's divorce had delayed the marriage until then, but as early as the 25th of June Wagner wrote to Frau Wille announcing it as an imminent event. If Wagner thus announced it to his acquaintances, Nietzsche must have been told even earlier.

Now in the middle of June Nietzsche had passionately entreated his sister to stay with him in Basel, and she had yielded at once to his entreaties. The imminent marriage of Cosima would crush his hopes. He needed his sister's affection as a surrogate. Cosima would henceforth be barred to him by the terms of self-abnegation which his own ideal demanded of him.

He was a hero whose sacrifice must be commensurate with that of the artist whom Wagner seemed to him to be.

When the war broke out, Nietzsche went with his sister for a fortnight up to the mountains, and fought out more than one battle in his heart. The result was the essay on *The Dionysian Outlook on the World* which he read to Cosima and Wagner before he went to the front, without making it clear to them however that he *was* going away. He departed in silence. While at his weakest in hospital, Wagner sent him news of the marriage. He replied to Wagner with conventional congratulations. At Christmas he went to Tribschen, and presented Cosima with the printed text of *The Dionysian Outlook*. To Wagner he gave Dürer's etching, *The Knight, The Devil and Death*.

In January, *The Birth of Tragedy* was to all intents and purposes finished, and so were some fragments we possess of a curious lyrical drama called *Empedocles*. It is to these two works, therefore, that we must turn to discover what were the preoccupations of Nietzsche's thought in the autumn, winter, and spring after his return to Basel from the battle-fields.

Now it so happens that we have Nietzsche's own explanation of *The Birth of Tragedy* written long after, in 1886. It is entitled *An Effort at Self-Criticism*, and we may trust it implicitly. 'We Nietzsches scorn to lie.' What was the seed of 'this doubtful book', as Nietzsche calls it? Was it his experience on the battle-field? No. He tells us that it originated *in spite of* the

Franco-Prussian War. It originated in some speculations on the Greeks which he wrote in a cranny of the Alps during the battle of Wörth. These speculations are no other than his essay on *The Dionysian Outlook* which he had read to Cosima before he set out for the battle-fields. The kernel of the book was therefore the thoughts which he wrote out for Cosima.

He calls *The Birth of Tragedy* an impossible book, 'in which my juvenile ardour and suspicion discharged their energy'. Ardour for what, and suspicion of what? We approach a great personal drama here.

He adds that the book was defiantly self-sufficient, even when it appeared to bow to authority. To what authority did it appear to bow? To that of Richard Wagner, 'the Master'. Yet it does not really bow to Wagner, he tells us. It masks his real feelings of—equality with Wagner? Or superiority?

The spirit behind this book was virginal, 'a spirit with strange and still nameless needs', but identified with the spirit of Dionysos, the Dionysos who worshipped Ariadne. It was 'a new soul', and 'it ought to have sung rather than spoken'. Did this new soul try to sing? Yes, at this very time it was writing a lyrical drama, the *Empedocles* which I have already mentioned. This drama he suppressed in embryo, and in 1886 he bitterly laments his cowardice. 'How deeply I regret that at that time I lacked the courage (or the immodesty) to permit myself to use in every way a *personal* language for such *personal* contemplation.' Schopenhauer had taught him that the tragic spirit

shows us the world as unable to satisfy us completely, and that it leads us in consequence to resignation. 'Oh, how differently Dionysos spoke to me!'

Schopenhauer counsels abnegation and resignation. Leave what your heart desires — to Richard Wagner! Dionysos counsels the opposite. Obey the will to power, and capture Cosima! The internal conflict is tragically evident. Fought out in the mind and will, the battle was a draw. Both sides dug into the trenches for a lifetime. In the end, was it Nietzsche's reason which gave way?

The Birth of Tragedy begins with a foreword addressed to Wagner in which he imagines the Master returning from a walk to 'behold Prometheus unbound on the title-page'. Superficially this foreword is a hymn of praise to the Master, but let us look for the irony concealed beneath the fair-seeming honeyed words.

Not long before, Wagner had entrusted to Nietzsche the printing of his autobiography. The vignette on the title page was to represent a vulture, which Wagner held to be his family crest. 'Geyer' is the German word for vulture, and the implication of the crest is that Ludwig Geyer, Wagner's alleged step-father, was really his father. The suggestion that the vulture should appear in the vignette came from Nietzsche, and was accepted by Wagner himself without any suspicion.

Now if we examine the first edition of *The Birth of Tragedy* we shall find that its title-page also has a

vignette. Prometheus Unbound reclines with his heel on a vulture which sleeps in complete unconsciousness of Prometheus. Prometheus gazes upward into the heavens as if aroused from slumber.

What did the myth of Prometheus signify to Nietzsche at this time? He tells us himself. 'The secret core of the story of Prometheus is the necessity to commit crime imposed on the man who is striving as a Titan . . . What distinguishes the Aryan presentation is the sublime view of *active sin* as the special virtue of Prometheus . . . Prometheus is but a mask of Dionysos.'

Prometheus, therefore, who is really Dionysos, sets his heel on the sleeping vulture Wagner, who tortured him before he was unbound. He gazes upward into the Dionysian heaven where active sin becomes his special virtue.

What active sin is the virtue of Dionysos?

A poem written by Nietzsche in later life on the eve of his madness clearly furnishes the clue. The poem is called *The Lament of Ariadne*.

'Who warms me, who loves me still?
Give burning hands!
Give heart-braziers!

Thou scornful eye, that lookest at me out of the
dark.

Here I lie!
Bend myself, twist myself, tormented

By every undying torture,
Struck
By thee, cruellest of huntsmen,
Thou unknown — God!

‘Strike deeper!
Strike once again!
Stab, break this heart!
What meaneth this torture
With dull-barbed arrows?
Why dost thou gleam at me
(Mortal pain does not weary thee,)
With the lightning eye of a God enjoying my pain?

Wherefore martyr me,
Thou unknown God enjoying my pain?

‘Ha! ha!
Dost thou steal near
On such a midnight?
What wilt thou?
Speak!
Thou oppressest me, thou weighest me down!
Ha! now art thou much too nigh!
Thou hearest me breathe!
Thou overhearest mine heart!
Thou jealous one!
Of what art thou jealous?
Away! away!
Wherefore the clues?

Wilt thou enter
Into my heart,
Wilt thou enter
Into my uttermost secret thoughts?
Shameless! unknown! thief!
What wilt thou steal?
What wilt thou overhear?
What wilt thou torture,
Thou torturer?
Thou — hangman — God!
Or must I, like a dog,
Roll over for you?
Fond, my love for thee charmed out of me,
Wag my tail?
In vain!
Stab on!
Most cruel of goaders!
No dog am I — but thy quarry,
Most cruel of hunters!
Thy proudest prisoner,
Thou robber behind the cloud-banks! . . .
Speak out at last!
Thou veiled lightning! Unknown One! Speak!
What wilt thou, footpad, of — me? . . .

‘What?

Ransom?

What wantest thou of ransom?

Demand much — thus counselleth my pride!

And say little — thus counselleth my other pride!’

'Ha! Ha!

Me — thou demandest? Me?

Me — entire? . . .

'Ha! ha!

And martyrest thou me, fool that thou art,

Martyrest thou the shreds of my pride?

Give me *Love* — Who warms me still?

Who loves me still?

Give me burning hands,

Give me heart-braziers.

Give me the loneliest thing,

Give me ice seven times congealed,

Give me, yes, yield unto me,

Most cruel enemy,

Yield unto me — thyself!

Away he goeth!

There he fleeth himself,

My only comrade,

My mighty enemy,

My unknown One,

My hangman — God! . . .

'Nay!

Come back!

With all thy tortures!

All my tears flow

Toward thee,

And the last flames of my heart

Glow upward toward thee!
Oh, come back,
My unknown God! My *Grief!* my last happiness!
'*A flash of lightning, Dionysos appears in emerald
loveliness.*

DIONYSOS.

'Be wise, Ariadne! . . .
Thou hast tiny ears, thou hast my ears:

.

I am thy labyrinth. . . '

Such is Nietzsche's theophany. He inserted the poem in the last part of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, putting the lines in the mouth of a magician who may be identified as Wagner, but omitting the lines spoken by Dionysos. The drama is further clarified by a fragment entitled *Naxos: From the Conversations between Dionysos, Theseus, and Ariadne*.

' "Theseus becomes absurd", said Ariadne. "Theseus becomes virtuous!" ' (The hero admiring himself, becoming absurd.)

'Jealousy of Theseus at Ariadne's dream. Dionysos without jealousy. What I love in thee, how can a Theseus love *that?* One is not jealous if one is God: unless of the Gods.

* * *

' "Ariadne," said Dionysos, "Thou art a labyrinth: Theseus hath lost his way in thee; no longer holdeth he any thread; what doth it matter to him now that he

will not be devoured by the Minotaur? What devoureth him now is worse than a Minotaur." "Thou flatterest me", Ariadne replied, "but I shall not pity if I love; I am weary of my pity: by me must all heroes perish. That is my last love for Theseus: I destroy him."

* * *

‘Last Act. Wedding of Dionysos and Ariadne.’

The secret of Nietzsche's lifetime was kept. As Nietzsche himself exclaimed in *Ecce Homo*: 'Who knows but I who Ariadne is?' Now, however, the central clue to Nietzsche's life is quite fully in our grasp. We may follow the thread of it with the utmost certainty into the labyrinth. Let us begin by examining the fragments of *Empedocles*, remembering that Cosima wrote to him one day in the years of their friendship: 'What you write answers every question raised unconsciously in my inner conscience.'

The German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, to whom Nietzsche had offered allegiance since early boyhood, had written a lyric drama entitled *The Death of Empedocles*. This drama had profoundly impressed Nietzsche as a boy at school, and indeed in its passionate beauty it stands unequalled in modern literature though closely approached by Shelley and Keats in the highest flights of their lyrical genius. In *The Death of Empedocles* lies very much more than the germ of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Empedocles, as Hölderlin conceived him, was avid to reach the perfection of

joy for a moment, that he might sing the perfect song ere he dies. The price of perfect joy is supreme sorrow, and implies supreme sacrifice through tragic error. Empedocles strips himself of the tragic illusion, transvalues all values, seduces the people who reject him as no longer one in spirit with nature, and lives alone without gods in a living death till he resolves to expiate his crime by self-immolation. He offers to reveal to the multitude his secret, the everlasting renewal of mankind by death the regenerator, and next morning consummates the revelation by giving his body to Mount Etna to be consumed.

Such is Hölderlin's philosophy and such is the model he set before Nietzsche to follow. In Nietzsche's play, the scene is laid in Catania at the foot of Mount Etna. There in a country house live two noble women, Lesbia and her daughter Corinna. In Corinna is reflected the image of Cosima Wagner. These women maintain the pure noble Hellenic tradition against the invading corruptions of their time. Etna is rumbling, and menacing flames leap from its summit. The air is heavy with portent, and men fear. Pausanias visits Corinna. These two are about to rehearse the roles they will fill in the theatre on the morrow when the feast of Dionysos is to take place. Fear invades the scene. As some countrymen pass the door, a maiden falls stricken to death on the ground. Pausanias forgets his lines and he believes that the plague has stricken him. Corinna endeavours to comfort him in vain.

The people now throng the streets in lamenting procession, hopelessly seeking a saviour. Fear and pity themselves spread the contagion, to which there is no antidote but tragedy. A rhapsodist comes on the scene, but proves impotent to cure them. A stronger magic than poetry is needed. Empedocles appears with his symbols of sacrifice, and Pausanias in delirious terror casts himself down at his feet. This is not Greek, and Corinna scorns Pausanias. She is angry with Empedocles whose new power she does not comprehend. Then the dawn rises over this scene of confusion.

In the second act Empedocles stands veiled in front of the altar in the council room of the city while the councillors enter. He cries out: 'The plague is in the midst of you! Be Greeks.' He forbids all pity and fear, but the people forget their old Greek heroism. The mob outside storm the council room and offer Empedocles a kingly crown if only he will save them. The crown is brought to him by Corinna herself. He proposes for their salvation a tragedy, the tragedy of Theseus and Ariadne. On hearing this, Corinna shudders convulsively.

In the third act, the tragedy begins. Dionysos is saving Ariadne after her betrayal of Theseus. Now Ariadne was Cosima, so-called by Bülow to Nietzsche. Bülow had been her Theseus whom she had betrayed for 'Dionysos'-Wagner. In the play, however, Pausanias would seem to have forgotten his lines, and to have foregone playing the part of Dionysos through

fear, and it is Empedocles, that is to say, Nietzsche, who acts the part of the god. As the actor sacramentally represents Dionysos the saviour, the people of Catania are drunken with joy in the self-sacrifice of that death which always brings regeneration. The people honour Empedocles as the god Dionysos himself, while he begins to weaken and to pity the people once more. 'The actor-Dionysos is laughably in love with Corinna.'

Pausanias sinks down dying of the plague, and Corinna rushes to help him. Empedocles draws her back to himself and reveals his own inner godhead. Corinna then surrenders to him in allegiance. The dying Pausanias reproaches her in words whose accent of suffering moves Empedocles deeply. Pity again invades his heart, and he doubts his divinity, and consequently also doubts his own justification. However, he hardens his heart and continues to preach annihilation to the assembled people.

In the fourth act, we see Empedocles proclaiming the necessity of accepting the plague to the citizens assembled for the evening Bacchanalian festival in honour of Dionysos. An aged grey-haired mother shows lofty acceptance of death before the corpse of her child. The people have now become calm and free through acceptance of destiny. By accepting destiny the god has been enabled to appear in their midst. Empedocles is sullen, however, as he comes back to the house of Corinna.

In the fifth act Empedocles appears in the night

among his disciples, whom he has led to the slopes of Etna, and as they stand bowed before him, preaches to them the mystical virtue of death. But Empedocles is deceived in his estimate of the people's firmness. They show themselves cowardly when it comes to the final moment. They fear death even more than they fear the plague. The mob turns into a rout as two streams of lava from Etna encompass them and they know that they cannot escape.

Now Empedocles weakens again, for he wonders if the people are not right. Is it not only through life that regeneration is possible? He has betrayed life by leading it unto death, and he must pay the penalty. That penalty is everlasting death.

Only one of the host is prepared to follow him. Corinna, whom Empedocles has torn away from the arms of Pausanias, offers herself to him in the arms of Death. Empedocles repulses her, and she rebukes him profoundly. 'Would Dionysos flee from Ariadne?' Together they fling themselves into the crater of Etna. So ends the drama of Empedocles and Corinna as conceived by Nietzsche at this time. In life it ended so for Friedrich Nietzsche. He fled from Ariadne, as we shall see, but when he flung himself into the crater in January 1889 his last words were addressed to Cosima: '*Ariadne, ich liebe dich!* Ariadne, I love thee!' Cosima lived on alone for two generations.

XIII

WE must now return to the outward course of Nietzsche's life immediately after the Franco-Prussian War. In the light of the drama which has been disclosed, it will be easier to interpret the outward event. The seeds of conflict so far were only sown. It took long for them to expand into tragic action.

When Nietzsche saw Wagner again after his marriage, the Master suffered some diminution in the young philosopher's esteem. He seemed coarsely overjoyed at the defeat of France which delighted him as he remembered how Parisian audiences had hooted at him in the earlier days of his music.

To Nietzsche the justification of such heartfelt rejoicing was not altogether clear. French culture seemed to him superior to that of a Prussia flushed with self-aggrandizement. His friend Jakob Burckhardt agreed with him. Great empires were hostile to the highest culture. Athens and Florence in their prime were small city states. The two men discussed these matters on daily walks up and down the Cathedral terrace at Basel above the swift-racing Rhine.

Burckhardt condensed the result of these conversations in a lecture on *Historical Greatness* to his students. 'Do not mistake a military triumph, or the expansion of a mighty state, for real greatness! Historical great-

ness rests wholly in the works of great men. Goethe gave the world a *Faust*: Newton the law that governs the solar system. This is true greatness, and other there is none.'

Meanwhile Nietzsche was writing to Erwin Rohde. 'I am full of anxiety for the immediate future . . . Take care to free yourself from this fatal Prussia which hates culture! Footmen and priests spring up from its soil like mushrooms and they will soon darken the whole of Germany with their smoke!'

With Nietzsche, to feel anxiety was always to feel the need for immediate action. How could he save Germany from the imminent disaster he now foresaw? The new Germany must have leaders to guide its spiritual life. These leaders should now be preparing themselves for the day when their action might intervene to save their unhappy people.

Wagner was straining every nerve to establish a home for music at Bayreuth. Should Nietzsche join him? No, he would endeavour to establish elsewhere an academy of his own, a monastery of thought and philosophical labours where he and a chosen few in silent meditation would strive to solve the problems of the time. Here his old friends Rohde and Gersdorff and Deussen would join him, as well as his new friends Overbeck and Burckhardt, and in cloistered peace, free of all obligation, a little community of solitaries would shape the new German world outside the State. It seemed to him that two years would be sufficient to found and organize such a community.

By Christmas, the idea had kindled such a glow in his mind that he believed it might take effect at once. He wrote to Erwin Rohde, therefore, in December, a lyrical letter full of the most joyous enthusiasm. In the course of it he announces that no revolutionary truth can come out of the universities. 'We shall cast off their yoke and then form a new Greek academy. Perhaps my plan may seem to you only an eccentric whim. It is not, however: it is imperative . . . Let us try to find a small island. Then we shall be the masters of one another . . . let us live, let us labour, let us enjoy for the sake of one another: so only, perhaps, will it be possible for us to work for the *whole* . . . I have already begun to curtail my expenses so that I may have a small fund in reserve. We shall try our luck in lotteries. For whatever books I am able to write I shall ask the highest possible remuneration. To sum up, we shall overlook no legitimate means of success in founding our monastery . . . Is it not *necessity* that spurs us along our road?'

This letter was written just before Christmas, and Nietzsche was restless and uneasy until he had a reply. At Tribschen Wagner kept talking about Bayreuth, but Nietzsche held his peace about his own project.

Rohde's reply was a friendly refusal to participate in the plan. It lapsed, therefore, and Nietzsche returned to his writing, immersing his mind in *The Birth of Tragedy*. He decided that the new culture must be based on slavery. 'For want of slavery, we are perishing.' The new bastard culture was based on the

fear of war. 'If the soul of the state is not to be made base by the spirit of financial speculation, we must have war and yet again war: there is no other way . . . War is as essential to the state as the slave is essential to society.'

So he had decided, but events seemed to give the lie to his theory. War had made Athens great, but had war made Germany great? Was it not rather with Germany as with Rome? The sap which should run to blossom was expanding the leaves and stalks at the expense of the flower. The aim of Athens was strength and beauty of spirit: the aim of Rome and Prussia was to grasp gold.

Who sympathized now with Nietzsche in these thoughts? No one, it seemed, but Rohde. He sank into a gulf of melancholy, and showed all the symptoms of a bad nervous breakdown. He kept his mood prisoned in secrecy, and did not confide it to Wagner or Cosima. Now he began to suffer from jaundice, inflammation of the bowels, serious eye-trouble, and insomnia. The doctors ordered him to take a long holiday, and the University also pressed him to do so. He sent for his sister, took her to Tribschen with him to say good-bye, and on the 12th of February they reached Lugano.

On the journey over the St. Gothard Pass, Nietzsche found himself in the same diligence with a stern old man who was travelling incognito. At Flüelen they entered into conversation, and from the old man's words it dawned upon Nietzsche that he was con-

versing with the most illustrious living Italian. The stranger was no other than Giuseppe Mazzini, the man whose thought had achieved Italian unity. It is one of life's greatest ironies that these two men, each of them destined in his own special passionate way to alter profoundly the course of modern history, should have passed each other like ships in the night without further intercourse. Mazzini, however, quoted to the young German four lines of Goethe which summed up, he said, the whole secret of his own life:

‘To strive without ceasing,
To be weaned from half-measures,
To live resolute
In the Whole, the Good, and the Beautiful.’

Nietzsche never forgot these lines. What he said to Mazzini in turn we do not know.

The change of scene at Lugano was effective. He laughed and gambolled and cut capers with his sister as if they were children again, and for part of the day he wrote chapter after chapter of *The Birth of Tragedy* with great rapidity. We have fragments of the version on which he was then engaged, and a comparison of them with the book as it was published eventually reveals very clearly the real mood of Nietzsche at the time, a mood completely veiled in the final version.

His words are well-nigh delirious with pride. He speaks as an oracle with the voice of Empedocles, nay, of Dionysos. He shudders in the wind of his own avowals, and warns the weak of heart to beware of his

revelations. He longs to find one day a man of lofty will and audacity: 'wrestler, poet, and philosopher all in one, who will march with a tread that strides over serpents and monsters. This future hero of tragic knowledge will display on his brow the reflection of that Hellenic serenity, that aureole in the light of which will begin a resurrection of antiquity still to come, the German renaissance of the old Greek world.'

Such a man, it is clear from his words, he has not yet found in Wagner. Who will this godlike German be but Nietzsche himself, Nietzsche, the Son of the Morning?

So he felt in those halcyon days at Lugano, and so he wrote in a much more personal mood to the faithful Rohde. 'Each day I penetrate more and more into my kingdom of philosophy . . . I know not, I cannot know, whither my destiny leads . . . What a sensation it is to see one's world lying before one, a perfect sphere, round and all complete . . . Pride and folly are weak words to express my present state of mental "insomnia." '

Nietzsche returned to Basel on the 10th of April. In sixteen days his book was at last completed, and he sent it off to a publisher in triumph.

XIV

His elation did not last long. First of all, the publisher, to whom Nietzsche had sent *The Birth of Tragedy* declined it. Then came the news of the Paris Commune and it was reported in Basel on the 23rd of May that Paris was destroyed and that the Louvre had been burned to the ground. The slave-men of France had destroyed the greatest monument of European culture. The values of culture were being denied completely.

Nietzsche rushed out of the house to find his friend Burckhardt, the only man who could share his loneliness. Burckhardt was not at home, and Nietzsche paced the streets in despair. At length he returned home to find Burckhardt there. Nietzsche's sister heard sobs in the room where the two men were endeavouring to comfort each other. 'When I heard that Paris was in flames,' he wrote to Gersdorff, 'I felt absolutely helpless for several days. A life devoted to science, philosophy, and art seemed ridiculous to me when the finest works of art, nay, of entire periods of art, could thus be destroyed in a day.'

Now Nietzsche saw rather more of Wagner and Cosima, but their life at Tribschen seemed to him no longer the same. The quiet of their little world was much invaded. Visitors filled the house, and Wagner

was all things to all men as he sought to promote the founding of Bayreuth. Nietzsche's hero had shrunk considerably in his eyes now that Wagner immersed himself in practical details.

Nevertheless, Nietzsche offered to go on a tour in Northern Germany to preach Wagner's doctrine and make as many converts as possible. Wagner discouraged the idea, and Nietzsche yielded, but he was restless and unhappy about it, especially since one publisher after another kept refusing his book.

From July to September he spent near Mürren with his sister and with Gersdorff, revising the book, and adding further chapters about Wagner to it. In October he went to Leipzig to hawk it about, and finally offered it in its revised form to Fritzsche, who was Richard Wagner's publisher. To Nietzsche's delight Fritzsche accepted the book, and published it at last at the end of the year.

Nietzsche was now elated once more, and full of the highest possible hopes of a golden future. Even Basel seemed pleasant now. Confident in the success of his forthcoming book he was filled with the powerful zeal of a young reformer. He announced for immediate delivery a series of lectures at Basel *On the Future of Our Educational Institutions*. These lectures were to foreshadow his plan of a new Greek academy.

Meanwhile Wagner had organized for the 18th of December a great concert at Mannheim. The Master was met with a tumult of public applause when he arrived at the station. Soon after, another train

steamed in bringing Ariadne and the young Dionysos.

Not long before, Wagner had written to Nietzsche: 'In the last few days my eyes have strayed from Gemelli's picture of *Dionysos among the Muses* to your latest work with the most real astonishment. It seemed as if an oracle had revealed a message to me.' Which was the real Dionysos? Wagner read into Nietzsche's writing a portrait of himself, but we have seen that Nietzsche felt otherwise. Cosima appears not to have expressed any personal opinion.

Whoever was Dionysos that day, it is clear that Nietzsche was transported by Wagner's music. He poured out his feelings to Rohde: 'I was like a man who sees his own dream fulfilled. For this is music, and nothing else is worthy the name.' Kundry's sorcery had won her a temporary victory.

Nietzsche returned to Basel heady with intoxication. It was nearly Christmas, and he was invited, as always, to Tribschen for the festivities. Why did he decline the invitation? What had moved him most at Mannheim was the *Siegfried Idyll* which he had heard for the first time alone at Tribschen with Cosima and the Master on the previous New Year's Eve. He would compose a programme symphony called *New Year's Idyll* and dedicate it to Cosima. It reached her on New Year's Eve, this Tribschen idyll. On the same day *The Birth of Tragedy* appeared at Leipzig.

On New Year's Eve the first copies of the book reached Basel. Nietzsche hastened to dispatch a copy to Wagner with a warm letter of pride and gratitude.

'If I am convinced that I am essentially right, that means that you, *in your art*, are right through all eternity. You will find on every page that I seek only to thank you for all you have given me. Yet a doubt weighs on me sometimes whether I have always received your gift as I should. Perhaps I shall be enabled to repay you somehow *later*: I mean, in the day of *accomplishment* when the Bayreuth era of civilization has arrived. Meanwhile I feel with pride that I am marked with a sign, and that my name will always be linked with yours. Woe to our philologists if they are determined to learn nothing to-day!'

The italics in this letter are not mine. 'You, *in your art*, are right through all eternity.' But in life? On the title-page the vulture is under the heel of Prometheus whom the spirit of Wagnerian music has unbound.

Wagner's hasty reply was fatuous: 'I have never read anything more beautiful than your book. I was saying, in fact, to Cosima that, after her, you came first, and a long way after that Lenbach, who has made a remarkable likeness of me! Meditate well what she has written to you, but ignore whatever the rest of the world may say.' In other words Nietzsche had made an excellent portrait of the Master as Dionysos.

What did Cosima say? At first she sent merely a formal acknowledgment. It was difficult to reply immediately after the Christmas and New Year's gifts which Nietzsche had just sent her. When she wrote at last, her chosen words were profound.

'How beautiful your book is! How beautiful and profound! How profound and daring! Who will reward you, I would ask myself with anguish if I did not know that in the mere conception of these things you must have found the most beautiful recompense. But if you feel recompensed, do you know how to put your interior state of mind, so grandiose and revealing, in harmony with the outer world in which you are obliged to live? "*Wie ertrug ich's nur, wie ertrag' ich's noch?*" ["How did I bear it then, how do I bear it still?"] Yet "the day" comes to your aid, and no doubt also the melodies of New Year's Eve. Is it not so?

'In this book you have evoked demons whom I believed obedient to the Master only. Over two worlds, of which one is invisible because it is too far away from us, and the other is unknown to us because it is too near — you have cast the liveliest beam of radiance, so that we grasp the beauty which had enchanted us with premonition and comprehend the ugliness which had nearly crushed us. Your light is cast for our consolation into the future — which for our hearts is present, so that we may pray with hope in our hearts: May good be victorious!

'I cannot tell you how much your book, in which you define with such truthful simplicity the tragedy of our existence, has seemed capable to me of elevating our thoughts . . . I have read this work as if it were a poem, though it opens for us the most profound of all problems; and I cannot lay it aside any more than the Master can, for it offers a reply to all

the unconscious questions of my soul. You can picture how deeply your mention of *Tristan und Isolde* has moved me.'

The meaning which Wagner had missed in *The Birth of Tragedy* is clear enough now to Ariadne at last, and she answers Dionysos in the very words of Isolde as Wagner himself had put them into her mouth. '*Wie ertrag ich's nur, wie ertrag' ich's noch?*' 'How did I bear it then, how do I bear it still?' And in these words she seals with Friedrich Nietzsche a sacred bond, a bond of abnegation.

She recognizes that he is Dionysos, but her highest loyalty is to the art which they both serve. That art is for her the music of Richard Wagner, however unworthy an instrument the Master himself may be. To that art she was ever faithful as she conceived it, and out of that spirit of music was born a great personal tragedy.

Dionysos to her is the god, and for gods in this world there is never a human reward. To know this fills her with anguish, and yet, after all, is not godhead its own highest reward? Yet how is a god to adjust his interior life to the outward human world in which he is bound, to the human desires which bring him suffering in terrible godlike measure? Perhaps the memory of last New Year's Eve will come to his aid.

Meanwhile Nietzsche has illumined the world for her, so that she sees both the beauty and the ugliness of the life about her with lucid comprehension in her heart. May the future bring victory to the nobler side!

The questions her soul had unconsciously asked are now fully answered at last, and the tragedy of Tristan and Isolde must be resolved.

Cosima had no secrets from Richard Wagner. To him she now disclosed the secret drama. Wagner asked Nietzsche to Tribschen, and when he declined the invitation, explaining that he was suffering from a new breakdown, wrote him on January 10th a direct letter in which he made his own position clear.

‘The news of your illness created in me an extremely painful impression. You must pardon me if we have often perceived, and always with the most deeply anxious feelings, certain recurrent symptoms . . . in so far as they affect your inner spiritual life. Since our friendship began, disquieting signs have been visible for which, I admit, you often gave us an explanation, but which have recurred at such regular intervals as to raise the deepest misgivings in our minds as to whether it is possible to preserve our intimate and friendly relationship . . . Just as we have nearly come to the conclusion that the publication of your book — if not, in fact, the fundamental conception of it — had driven you, at least for the time being, into a state of mind curiously like regret — you suddenly break your long silence and tell us that you have been ill. Your illnesses have already been the source of the greatest anxiety to us, not because we have serious fears of your physical condition, but rather because of the state of your emotions.’

He goes on to bid Nietzsche to Tribschen again, and

to praise him warmly. He concludes by saying that more than his praise he has nothing that he is free to bestow. To this letter Nietzsche replied in touching words, we are told by his sister, 'which completely dispelled all doubts, as Wagner said later.' That letter, however, if it still exists, has not been vouchsafed to our knowledge.

Whether Nietzsche regretted the book or not, it was a trophy for Wagner to display to his friends. Nietzsche sent it at Wagner's request to all of them, even to the King of Bavaria.

Meanwhile Nietzsche proceeded on his own way. On the 16th of January he delivered the first of his lectures of *The Future of Our Educational Institutions*. His speech was triumphant and gave him courage again. The students offered him a torchlight procession because he had refused a professorship at Greifswald, and the University raised his salary. Ail Basel was full 'of emotion, enthusiasm, and hate inextricably mingled.'

Nietzsche's sense of power returned to him in flood. He planned a violent pamphlet addressed to Bismarck about the proposed new German university to be established on French soil at Strasbourg, in which he proposed to command the imperial government to establish there a centre of culture like Bayreuth instead of humiliating the culture of the defeated French race.

Why did this elation vanish so suddenly? The tone of his letters changed from day to day. A sense of failure quickly followed this first quick flush of triumph.

The pamphlet for Bismarck was quickly dismissed from his mind.

The reason is clear. *The Birth of Tragedy* met with dead silence. It seemed as if it had actually been still-born. Not a line appeared in the Press commenting upon it. Not a scholar noticed its appearance. Even Ritschl failed to acknowledge the copy which Nietzsche had sent him. Rohde's review of the book was refused by journal after journal. Only Wagner and his circle seemed aware that *The Birth of Tragedy* existed, and they were preoccupied with their own plans for Bayreuth.

Dionysos had spoken to a world which ignored his existence, and the pride of the god was mortally wounded by his world's neglect. To Rohde he exclaimed: 'I am convinced that my book will not perish.' To Ritschl he wrote complaining at his silence. When Ritschl replied in words of noble rebuke rather than of flattery, Nietzsche wrote back in furious and violent retort: 'I express the conviction I hold that it will take several generations before the philologists know how to understand a book so esoteric and so scientific in the highest sense of the word.'

Life at Tribschen was also drawing to a close, and Ariadne would soon depart from Switzerland for ever. Her sorcery had led Nietzsche to make his book a hymn to the Master. Had he, by doing so, betrayed the severe science of philology and his master Ritschl? The thought must have crossed his mind and been banished fiercely. It would alternate with other tragic

regrets. Ariadne was not for him, but only for the Master. .

Hans von Bülow came to see him in Basel for the first time. He spoke to Nietzsche of Cosima bitterly. 'Cosima has morally ruined me. She will ruin Wagner also.' He did not know to whom he spoke, nor did he perceive the profound tragic irony of his words. To Nietzsche the irony was quite apparent, and secretly he must have registered a vow to preserve his own genius from ruin. Cosima, it is clear, he was too proud to blame, but from that day on he began to blame the Master.

He might blame the man, but he was still pledged to the music. If his book had failed, perhaps he was good for nothing. Ought he not to abandon his own career and enlist entirely under the Wagnerian banner? Perhaps that was the only creative effort of which he would ever be capable after all. Moreover, it would keep him close to Ariadne. Rohde could be his substitute at Basel while he travelled over the length and breadth of Germany as herald of Bayreuth. Wagner refused the offer of Nietzsche's services and told him to finish his book on educational institutions.

On the 27th of April 1872 the final day of parting from Tribschen came. The Master was away, and when Nietzsche came to 'the Island of the Dead,' he knew that he would find Cosima alone. She flitted from room to room, seemingly absorbed in the task of packing. He helped her with fumbling hands to pack up Wagner's manuscripts, books, and letters. 'We

walked as if we were walking among ruins. The air and the clouds were heavy with tears. The dog refused to eat. The servants burst into sobs when we spoke to them . . . Oh! it was desperate! The three years I have passed so close to Tribschen, in which I have visited there twenty-three times — how much they have meant to me! Had I never possessed them, what should I be now?" Such were his words to Gersdorff.

Suddenly he rushed to the open piano, and poured forth a heartrending improvisation to Cosima in which the spirit of music told her all he dared not trust to his lips in that tragic moment. Nearly sixty years later Ariadne remembered that parting music when Nietzsche for a few moments created tragic art for the woman he loved.

TRIBSCHEN is dead! Long live Bayreuth! Such was Cosima's philosophy. Four weeks later the cornerstone of the Festival Theatre was laid at Bayreuth on the 22nd of May, Richard Wagner's birthday. Nietzsche was there with Gersdorff and Rohde and all the friends he could muster up for the gathering, but his sister was absent. She had given her ticket away. Two thousand visitors assembled in the pouring rain while Wagner himself laid the stone, and in the evening, in the theatre of the Margrave, the Master conducted Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, while the chorus called to the audience assembled: 'O ye millions, now embrace!' To Nietzsche, as to all those who assisted there, it seemed for the moment as if they were truly present at the glorious dawn of a great new German culture.

In April, Nietzsche had spoken of leaving his professorship at Basel and going to Italy for a few years. Basel without Tribschen was Basel no longer for him. The ceremonies at Bayreuth for the moment cheered him, but hardly had he returned to Basel when he suffered a crushing blow.

A pamphlet appeared in Berlin at the beginning of June entitled *The Philology of the Future*. It proved to

be a stinging public attack on *The Birth of Tragedy* by a Pforta schoolmate, Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff. The title itself was derisive, for it parodied the title of a pamphlet which Richard Wagner had written. Its author lived to marry Mommsen's daughter and to become the greatest philologist of our time.

His attack was grounded on accurate scholarship, though its tone was grossly brutal. In later years Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, whose memoirs have recently been published in English, regretted the tone but never retracted the substance of his criticism. The pamphlet left Nietzsche stunned. He tried to rally his forces, but he could not do so, and turned to his friend Rohde, who leaped into the breach with a counter-pamphlet. To this Nietzsche's antagonist replied in a second pamphlet, and in the judgment of all his fellow-philologists was left with the victory securely in his grasp.

Smarting under the sting of this defeat, he read in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* an open letter addressed to him by Wagner from Bayreuth which opened with an allusion to the fatal pamphlet. This open letter deserves closer study than it has as yet received. There are undercurrents in it of double meaning which conceal as much irony as the vignette on the title-page of *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Ostensibly the burden of this message to Nietzsche is to urge him to devote himself to the cause of German educational institutions, and to enlighten Germany as to how it may improve them. This seems on the sur-

face to imply no more than a wish that Nietzsche should finish the course of lectures he had begun. Yet Wagner's meaning is deeper and much more personal. 'What we expect of you may be found perhaps to involve the task of a lifetime.' In other words, let the philological cobbler stick to his last!

Wagner's personal reason for all this is evident. It seems to him now that Nietzsche's allegiance is no longer to him as a man but to the cause for which Cosima stands because Cosima stands for it. He sniffs danger and endeavours to divert the energies of a rival. He has heard of the farewell music played at Tribschen. He has read between the lines of the letter to him which opens the pages of *The Birth of Tragedy*. With gloved hand he writes what the public may take to refer to Nietzsche's enemies, but what he means to refer with equal force to Friedrich Nietzsche himself.

'To be sure, every race carries in its own organism a germ of idiocy: we can see that among the French to-day, for example, absinthe is achieving what the Academy has prepared . . . No doubt our own philology has not yet achieved the *power* of the French Academy; for that matter our beer is not yet as heady as absinthe, but other qualities of the German — such as his jealousy and the malicious pleasure which is its corollary, with which he spits venom, and which may easily unite with an insincerity all the more criminal since apparent loyalty is conjoined with it — other qualities, I repeat, are of a nature so proble-

matical that the poisons which we receive from them may easily be substituted for many others.'

Nietzsche was too keen a psychologist for this profound barb to escape him, though it seems to have escaped every other reader of the letter from that day to this, as the meaning of his own prelude to *The Birth of Tragedy* has so far escaped us. His reply to Wagner appears to have been destroyed. We know, however, that he obstinately neglected to finish the course of lectures he had announced.

A fortnight later he gave the silent, more human answer to Wagner's summons. On the 28th of June he was in Munich whither Hans von Bülow, the discarded Theseus, as he had called himself to Nietzsche, invited him to the performance of *Tristan*. He sat throughout the opera under the spell of its tragedy, and heard again the words of Isolde in the second act, the words which Ariadne had so lately written him: '*Wie ertrag ich's nur, wie ertrag' ich's noch?*' 'How did I bear it then, how do I bear it still?'

Wagner had taunted him again in a letter before the performance. 'Nothing but *Tristan* remains to interest you. But take off your spectacles! You must pay no attention to anything but the orchestra. Adieu!' It was Isolde for whom Nietzsche sat in the theatre. Coming out after the performance he burst into tears and sobs and wrung Hans von Bülow's hand. He returned in tragic solitude to Basel to take up his own burden.

Alone with his sister, he resumed his philosophical

labours. He prepared lessons on the pre-Socratic philosophers. Out of these lessons he proposed to make a book which should be delivered to the public in 1874 simultaneously with the opening of Bayreuth. This book was first called *Tragedy in the Tragic Olden Time of the Greeks*. Later it was christened for a time *The Last Philosopher*.

It was to be a book 'loftier than the pyramids.' In the old Greek days philosophy was born simultaneously with tragedy. Tragedy had just been born for Nietzsche out of the spirit of Wagnerian music. It was time that philosophy also should be reborn. Out of his own tragic distress he would build a philosophy. Dionysos would be the last philosopher. He would create new values and confer them upon the world. Who knew what he might do afterwards? Perhaps he might abdicate before art and leave the world to Wagner in majestic abnegation.

As he meditated, he felt that he was a god, and throughout the autumn of 1872 he moved in the golden light of his own euphoria. Toward the end of September he went up into the high mountains, and exclaimed with a sense of discovery for the first time: 'This is my own true landscape.' A few days in Bergamo distressed him by their low-hanging languor and he mounted once more to the Splügen and felt the same mountain exaltation. Now he felt the first dawn of Zarathustra, and after this discovery he was never the same again.

From now on the life of Nietzsche oscillates between

lonely self-exaltation and even lonelier melancholy and depression. The recurrent euphoria always breeds, as it must, its own reaction, and we shall come to regard with the greatest concern each cycle of high elation in Nietzsche's life as his story unfolds from year to year before us.

On the 15th of October, his own birthday, we know that he wrote a long letter to Wagner, which his sister says was destroyed. Wagner's reply remains, in which he tells Nietzsche: 'By abandoning hope altogether it is possible for a man to rid himself of despair as well.' He announces that he and Cosima will shortly be coming to Basel to spend a week with the dentist. This plan fell through, but toward the end of November Nietzsche spent a week-end with them at their request, and offered once more, in the exultation of finding himself with Cosima, to travel over Germany as the herald of Wagnerian music. The offer was again refused, but all misunderstandings were talked out at last between Nietzsche and Wagner, and it seemed as if the sun might rise again on their friendship. Cosima in fact, wrote to Nietzsche: 'No misunderstanding can ever arise. I confess that I have been most anxious about it, but now I am quite convinced.'

It was a false dawn. New misunderstandings arose at once. Wagner asked Nietzsche to join him for Christmas. Nietzsche preferred to spend the holidays at home with his mother at Naumburg. He therefore sent Cosima as a somewhat belated gift *Five Prefaces to Five Unwritten Works* with a manuscript dedication

stating that they had been written 'in a pleasurable state of mind during the Christmas holidays of 1872.'

The gift was not acknowledged for several weeks. Cosima was piqued at the apparent coquetry of the dedication. Had he not claimed that, since Tribschen and her departure, life was too melancholy to be supported? And would it not have been an easy matter to pause at Bayreuth for a day on his way home from Naumburg?

Nietzsche waited on tenterhooks for a reply to his gift, and finally received a letter from Cosima about the middle of February. The Master had been deeply wounded by Nietzsche's absence, she said, and she had been much too busy to heal the breach. Neither Cosima nor Nietzsche believed the other's excuses. The old confidence between them was now destroyed.

Nietzsche smarted under a sense of injustice. He felt that he had sufficiently proven himself of late as Wagner's defender. Had he not written an article answering an alienist who declared that Wagner was mad? Poor as he was, had he not offered money for Wagnerian propaganda? Had he not made a great effort to found a Wagner Society at Basel? What more could the Master expect? Though he wrote to Bayreuth and patched up the breach for the moment, it left him suspicious. 'All is quiet now,' he wrote, 'but I cannot forget the matter. Wagner knows very well that I am ill, buried in work, and in need of a little freedom.'

What he really could not forget is disclosed in a

fragment called *Œdipus*, in which he speaks to the Sphinx in no veiled language. 'I call myself the last philosopher, because I am the last man. No one talketh to me but myself, and my voice cometh to me as if from a dying man! With thee, dear voice, with thee, the last breath of memory from human happiness, let us speak yet an hour longer: through thee I charm my loneliness away and deceive myself into society and love, while my heart striveth to believe that love is not dead. It cannot endure the shudder of the most lonely loneliness, and compelleth me to speak as if I were really two people.

'Is it thou that I hear, O my voice? Thou dost murmur? Thou dost curse? And yet thy curse shouldst burst the entrails of this world. Alas! it liveth still! and displayeth itself ever more and more cold and dazzling with the pitiless stars; it liveth still, more deaf and blind than before, and only *one* thing dieth — the Man!

'And yet! I hear thee still, beloved voice! Yet *one* other dieth beside me, the last man, in this universe. The last complaint, *thy* complaint dieth with me, the protracted woe! Woe! Sigh thy complaint for me, the last woeful man, for *Œdipus*!

The Sphinx did not answer with the last words he longed for: 'How did I bear it then, how do I bear it still?'

Meanwhile Gersdorff had been striving with all his might to smooth the surface currents of estrangement. Nietzsche was invited at last to spend Easter with

Wagner and Cosima at Bayreuth. He arrived with the manuscript of *Greek Philosophers during the Tragic Age* which he proceeded forthwith to read to Cosima. Wagner expressed disappointment at the subject matter. He felt that Nietzsche's literary efforts at this time should have a much more present bearing on Bayreuth, and he showed no hesitation in making this point of view clear to his young friend.

At this time Wagner had every excuse for anxiety. The Bayreuth foundation was very far from secure. Wagner had calculated that the necessary funds for the theatre would be readily obtained by issuing thirteen hundred certificates of patronage. Now, however, considerable time had elapsed, and only two hundred certificates had been subscribed. He was therefore irritable and unsympathetic to Nietzsche, and gave him to understand that he looked for more active and unselfish support from his friend. He played in fact, the part of Godwin to Nietzsche's Shelley, and Nietzsche was correspondingly impressed. He felt that his own life was shamefully aloof from the struggle and, 'almost shamefaced,' as his sister tells us, abandoned his book on the Greek philosophers.

'My despair was profound,' he wrote. 'Everything seemed to me criminal.' Was he really *Œdipus*, the last philosopher, the last man? Had he dramatized himself falsely in his lofty aloofness? Was he not ungrateful and base to shirk the heat and burden of the day and take refuge thus in cowardly and utterly selfish dreams? The only hope for him now, he wrote

to Rohde, lay in 'holy wrath.' He would insult Germany.

Whom should he choose as his first adversary? Wagner had spoken with contempt at Bayreuth of David Strauss and a book which he had just published entitled *The Old Faith and the New*. And Cosima herself had written to him: 'Throughout all Germany I encountered the utmost enthusiasm for David Strauss's new book, which proposes on the basis of a quotation from Helmholtz to deliver us from redemption and prayer and the music of Beethoven.'

Now, to Nietzsche, as we have already observed, Germany had seemed for over two years to have coarsened more and more, to have grown more and more philistine every day as the result of her military victory over France. Though the German army had proven victorious, it seemed as if German culture was going down rapidly to defeat. To Nietzsche who loved the Fatherland, this was a passionate grief which roused in him all the force of his righteous anger. Now Strauss proclaimed a new renaissance as haughtily as Wagner and Nietzsche themselves. In this renaissance science was to displace religion entirely, and to utilize art and music as its handmaid. To Cosima, who was deeply religious, this proposal was not only blasphemous, but seemed to menace art in its very foundations. 'Never,' she wrote to her nephew Clemens Brockhaus, 'was the bond of religion more indispensable. And if that snaps, where will Art find a soil in which it can grow?' Moreover, Strauss had attacked

Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* as formless rather than sublime, and by inference was attacking Wagner's music as well.

Strauss was the man clearly indicated to feel the force of Nietzsche's critical anger, and without hesitation, though much against his will, he accepted the necessity and prepared to battle against him. Such battle implied for Nietzsche internal conflict, for to him as to Strauss it seemed that the day of Christianity was over. So thought Wagner, but Cosima felt passionately otherwise. Nietzsche also agreed with Strauss in his evolutionary outlook, and he had quarrelled with Cosima more than once on this very subject. 'Ariadne,' he wrote in later years, 'was two thousand years behind the world in philosophic culture.'

The interior conflict is plain. He fought it out heroically within himself. The exterior conflict is now perhaps equally plain. Cosima and Nietzsche will silently dispute between them for the direction of Wagner's future art, toward or away from Christianity. Wagner and Nietzsche will silently dispute for the soul and body of Cosima. Cosima will win the battle for Christian art: Wagner will win the battle for Cosima. Nietzsche is doomed to defeat. Now, however, these battles are only beginning.

Out of despair Nietzsche assembled his thoughts and set himself to work busily on the first of his pamphlets entitled *Thoughts Out of Season*. He buried himself in solitary labour and wrote to no one. He did not even let Wagner know what subject he had undertaken. To Overbeck only did he confide his secret. Overbeck could be a potent ally.

The plan was taking shape in Nietzsche's mind of weaning Cosima away from Christianity through the proselytism of Overbeck, who had just written an essay on *Christianity in Contemporary Theology*. This essay was masterly and monumental. Nietzsche, who had now lived intimately with Overbeck in the same house for nearly three years, had been deeply influenced by the older man's ideas. For a long time Overbeck had been in no little measure the confidant of many of his troubles, and very often his gentle interposition had calmed down Nietzsche's worst nervous paroxysms. The two men had become well-nigh inseparable, and even their silences were understood by them both.

Nietzsche wrote of his friend that spring: 'Overbeck is the most serious man and inquirer, the frankest, the most simply amiable that a man could wish for a friend; and he possesses that radicalism without which

it is impossible for me to live henceforth.' He calls him also 'the most emancipated theologian who lives in the world to-day,' and tells all his friends that 'the theology of the future' is coming to birth in his own household at Basel, and that it will form a trinity with Wagner's music and his own philosophy. This great theologian was now busy combating David Strauss himself.

A third German writer, who signed himself Paul de Lagarde, came to reinforce their own strong ideas with a powerful contribution of his own. Lagarde was read by Nietzsche whose Lutheran tradition, symbolized by his father, avidly caught the contagion of Lagarde's bitter hatred of the Roman Catholic Church. Overbeck and Lagarde, therefore, were well fitted to convince Ariadne of the error of her ways in following Wagner's increasingly Catholic tendencies which, in Nietzsche's eyes, began to appear at times as the sickly religiosity of a sentimental coward.

With these thoughts in his mind, as well as memories of many conversations with Overbeck, he set to work on his own theological subject. Lagarde had set the match to his new ambition when he said in his book: 'Under the influence of a religious genius, produce your own religion, and let it be individual and national: so shall you produce in yourselves your God.'

'So shall you produce in yourselves your God!' Evolution suggested to Nietzsche, as he pondered these words, a process of progressive self-deification. The last philosopher might be transformed into a god. Then indeed

he would be Dionysos with all the power of Dionysos to win for himself the goal of all his striving. The germ of the Superman is created now.

While these ideas fermented in Nietzsche's brain, he suffered great physical pain. After a bad attack of influenza which lasted a month, his sight began to fail him. On Wagner's birthday he went to an oculist, and was told that his right eye could no longer function at all, while his left eye was excessively near-sighted. A fortnight later, after a second visit, the oculist ordered him a complete rest until the summer vacation, and the regular use of atropin, according to his sister's statement. He needed assistance, therefore, to compose his pamphlet, and fortunately his old friend Baron von Gersdorff came to Basel. Lying in semi-darkness he dictated day after day to his friend, and when June came to an end he sent the manuscript of *David Strauss* off to his publisher.

His old friend Romundt had been living now for some time in the same house with him and Overbeck, and when the pamphlet was completed it was decided that Nietzsche should go for the summer holidays to the Engadine with his sister and Romundt and Gersdorff. His health and spirits improved, as they usually did in high places, and his old dream of a monastic academy revived.

Walking near Flims one day with his sister, he stumbled upon a tiny old castle in a secluded place. A notice-board showed that the castle was for sale at a low price. They went over it and were delighted

with all that they saw. They would buy it and organize their philosophical cenacle. Nietzsche's sister would be housekeeper, and the little community would pass the time in plain living and high thinking.

There would be room for Wagner and Cosima, Burckhardt, Wagner's friend Malwida von Meysenbug, Overbeck, Romundt, Gersdorff, Rohde and Deussen.

'Here we shall make a covered walk like a cloister, and talk and walk in all weathers,' Nietzsche exclaimed. 'We shall talk a great deal, read a little, and write very little indeed.' The negotiations fell through, however, if they were really ever begun, and Nietzsche returned to Basel.

David Strauss had been published at the end of August, and was warmly commended by Wagner and a few others. It roused much discussion and many enmities. Nietzsche professed to rejoice very much in the latter. He had been reading Stendhal, and exclaimed: 'Now I enter Society with a duel.' Perhaps! When David Strauss died, however, a few weeks later Nietzsche was filled with remorse and believed that he had killed him.

The autumn cemented his friendship with Overbeck. Treitschke, the influential historian, wrote to his friend remonstrating with him about Nietzsche. He became more and more hostile to Overbeck, and finally made it clear that the latter must choose between Nietzsche and himself. To Overbeck's everlasting honour he chose to stand by Nietzsche and forfeit Treitschke's friendship with all the worldly

advantages it implied. It comforted Nietzsche to feel that his own ostracism in academic circles was shared by his friend, and their common anxiety about the future of German culture was another close bond.

A curious incident at this time roused in both men a new common anxiety of a much more personal nature. An elderly Danish woman, Rosalie Nilsen, called on Nietzsche several times in his room at Basel. She suggested to him that Fritzsche, his publisher, was bankrupt, and that the Internationale proposed to purchase the firm. Their object in doing so was to obtain a hold upon Wagner. Now Fritzsche published Overbeck as well as Nietzsche and Wagner, and the personal interest of all three in this report was very great. It seemed that Wagner was in great financial difficulties, and that the Internationale hoped to ruin him in this way. Overbeck and Nietzsche showed Rosalie Nilsen the door, but the rumours she brought disturbed them profoundly. It was not until the new year that their minds were relieved.

Meanwhile the financial situation at Bayreuth was bad enough. Wagner summoned a meeting of delegates for the 31st of October, which Nietzsche hastened to attend. The Master asked him to compose a strong appeal to the German nation on behalf of Bayreuth. In this appeal he was to call urgently for further funds. At first Nietzsche felt too unwell to undertake this, but urged by his friends he composed a solemn appeal in which he informed the German nation that its ignorance and miserliness were shame-

ful. Rohde advised him against the tone he adopted, and the lawyers and financiers assembled as advisers at Bayreuth unanimously rejected the appeal as dangerous. A more moderate manifesto by Adolf Stern was adopted by the delegates instead, and mailed to four thousand people throughout Germany who ignored it as completely as if they had never received it. That autumn the Wagnerian tide was obviously at its lowest ebb.

To Nietzsche the situation was perfectly clear, and his private notes at this time are extremely revealing. The reader to-day who studies them carefully for light on Nietzsche's personal psychology will be astonished at what must seem to him at first sight the man's hypocrisy in his relations to Wagner. Why does he still support him and claim to be his friend while his mind is poisonously affected with scorn and suspicion? The *Thoughts on Richard Wagner* were set down on paper in January, 1874, but to have attained such complexity and force of conviction they must have been rankling in Nietzsche's mind for a very long time.

Wagner, he says, is an unbridled despot, incredulous, neurotic, who simulates ecstasy, and cannot have a clear conscience. He is cynical and egotistical, totally lacking in deep sincerity. He is full of vulgar rancour, and to him the end always justifies the means. He is utterly unscrupulous, continually a renegade, changes his politics like a consummate trimmer, juggles ideas like a mountebank, and is a melodramatic rhetorician of the senses. Even in his music he is purely histrionic.

His passion is feigned, his poetry rococo. You come away from hearing his music feeling that you have participated in an orgy. Can it be that he has really any musical gift at all?

The people's instinct is right. They will not respond to this music. He has abandoned the cause of Revolution to sink into the arms of the King of Bavaria. Yet even Ludwig brings no decisive aid to the cause of Bayreuth. No, Wagner is not a reformer, for up to the present all things remain as they were. Such is the formidable indictment of Nietzsche against Wagner, yet Nietzsche still claims to be Wagner's friend.

How can we justify such an antinomy? It can be practically justified by Nietzsche's suffering, his hopeless longing for Cosima, his doubts of himself, his fears, and his physical illness. It can be illumined by studying the second of his *Thoughts out of Season* which he committed to paper at this time. Our warrant for reading between the lines of his Essay on *The Use and Abuse of History* is to be found in the following lines written by Nietzsche himself in later years. 'My first four *Thoughts Out of Season* have endeavoured to speak of my own experiences and undertakings to myself in such a way as not to underline my own particularity, but what I have in common with many sons of our time.' Let us therefore examine the second of these essays.

It opens with Nietzsche's first inverted parable: 'Consider the herds that are grazing . . . Man cannot behold them without regret, for even in all his human

pride he envies the happiness of the beasts. He desires to live without satiety and without pain as they do, but vainly, for he would not change places with them . . . And he wonders about himself, wonders why he can never learn to forget, but must ever cling to the past. No matter how far he runs or how fast, that chain runs with him also . . . He journeys with a black invisible burden which he can convincingly disclaim, and which he gladly disclaims whenever he talks with his fellows — so as to rouse their envy. Yet it pains him like the memory of a lost paradise.

‘He learns to understand the meaning of “once upon a time”, the pass-key . . . reminding man what his existence actually is, an imperfect tense which never turns into the present . . . Being is merely an everlasting has-been, which lives by denial and destruction and self-contradiction . . . The man who cannot leave himself behind on the moment’s edge, forgetting the past . . . will never know the meaning of happiness; and, what is even worse, will never do one little thing to make other people happy . . . A man of this sort no longer believes in himself or in his own existence . . . The beast, at least, lives without hypocrisy or ennui. . . .

‘Take a concrete instance, and imagine a man moved and ruled by a strong passion, either for a woman or for a theory. His world is completely changed. He is blind to the whole past, new sounds are dull and quite without meaning to him . . . All

his judgments of value are altered for the worse; much he can value no longer, for he can hardly feel it; he marvels that strange words and beliefs should have made sport of his mind so long, that his memories should have revolved in a tireless circle, too weak and exhausted to make one step away. . . .

‘What is left for him now to do but to turn his lively hatred against the barrier, raised by what professes to be culture, and to condemn as a judge that which has degraded and raised him as a man of flesh and blood and a creative source? . . .

‘No man has a higher right to our reverence than the man with the impulse and fortitude of justice . . . The hand of the just man summoned to sit in judgment no longer trembles as he upholds the scales: pitilessly he weighs down his own side of the scale, his eyes dim not as the balance rises and falls, and he gives sentence in a voice neither hard nor broken. If he were an icy demon of knowledge, he would scatter around him an icy atmosphere of terrible superhuman majesty, which would compel our fears rather than our reverence.

‘But he is a man who has sought to uplift himself from careless doubt to the strongest of certainty, from mild toleration to the command “thou shalt!”, from magnanimity which is rare, to be sure, to justice, which is an even rarer virtue. He has come to be like that demon, though he began as a poor simple mortal, and he must atone to himself above all for his own humanity and break his own nature to pieces on

the rock of an utterly impossible virtue . . . All things which compel a man to impose conditions upon his greatest love sap the roots of his strength: he must wither, and be dishonoured.'

Nietzsche's greatest love at this time was Cosima Wagner. Although he might love her with all his heart from afar, conditions were imposed. The religious condition barred him from enjoying his love, but a hero might win honour from forbearance. The other condition was rooted in dishonour. Nietzsche might only have contact with Cosima's spirit if he enlisted as Wagner's defender. Wagner he hated and despised: to defend him publicly sapped the roots of his strength. If he continued to do so actively, he felt that he must wither and be dishonoured in the act.

But love made him weak where he knew that he ought to be strong. He denied his inner voice, and in public still acted the part of Wagner's herald. In private, however, he confessed the truth and penned for his satisfaction the *Thoughts on Richard Wagner* which he had concealed.

Nietzsche's health that autumn was wretched. He succeeded in finishing his essay before Christmas, and joined his sister at Naumburg for the holidays. On New Year's Eve it seemed as if he had won his inner battle, for he wrote to Rohde: 'Ah! dear friend! One has no choice. One must either join the ranks of hope or despair. I have decided to hope once and for all.' Hope dictated the thoughts on Wagner which he set down on paper at once on his return.

In February the essay *On the Use and Abuse of History* was published. Nietzsche's friends sadly watched its public failure. Overbeck voiced their feelings when he exclaimed: 'Our friend's sense of isolation is painfully growing. A man may not sap continually the branch of the tree which supports him without incurring the gravest consequences.' Wagner and Cosima wrote to Nietzsche in terms of guarded approval. Behind the complimentary terms it was clear, however, that they wished him to be merely a Wagnerian writer.

Nietzsche's depression and self-torture increased. One night he sat in his room alone with Overbeck who accidentally spoke of *Lohengrin*. Nietzsche roused himself to fury and tore the opera to pieces with scorching invective. Suddenly he became silent, and Overbeck without comment changed the subject.

In his gloom Nietzsche turned once more to Schopenhauer, and wrote the third of his *Thoughts Out of Season*. The rough draft of *Schopenhauer as Educator* was finished by June, and the final draft in September. We know from his sister that Nietzsche dramatized himself as Schopenhauer in this essay. If further evidence be necessary, it will be found in the following passage from a letter written to his sister in January 1875. 'Ah! we free and lonely spirits know that we perpetually seem other than we are. While we desire nothing but truth and honesty, we are tangled in a net of misunderstanding; and our ardent wish cannot avoid a fog of false opinions, protective reticences, mistaken apprehensions from gathering around

our actions. A cloud of melancholy settles on our foreheads, for we prefer death to the necessity of pretence; and our continual feeling of bitterness gives us a threatening and volcanic spirit. From time to time we revenge ourselves for our compulsory concealment and self-restraint: we come out of our dens with frowning looks: our words and deeds are explosive, and may even lead in the end to self-destruction. I live in the midst of such dangers. Such lonely men as I require love and friends, to whom we can open our hearts as sincerely as to ourselves, and in whose presence the struggle for silence and hypocrisy may cease.' Now these words appear verbatim in *Schopenhauer as Educator*, except that for 'we' Nietzsche has written 'they' and for 'I' he has written 'Schopenhauer'.

The choice of Schopenhauer as his *nom de guerre* is significant. Ten years before at Leipzig, he had been saved from despair by Schopenhauer. The great pessimist had phrased his philosophy gaily, and had taught that the times of greatest sorrow may be the times of greatest creative power. Nietzsche went with his sister to the Falls of the Rhine near Schaffhausen at Whitsuntide. Sitting below the roar of the falls, he hammered out this essay in which he outlined, as far as he could, the new philosophy which was coming to birth in his mind.

He hears the desperate cry in the uttermost depths of his heart: 'How can I reach myself? How shall I find my true self again?' A dark battle is being fought in his soul, the battle of honesty against hypocrisy.

Schopenhauer can help him in this battle. No man has glimpsed deeper abysses of pain, yet no man has been more honestly and naturally cheerful. Schopenhauer was also constant and firm, and moved directly and harmoniously toward his goal. He avoided the dangers of isolation which menace the extraordinary man, refused to despair, and never let his heart harden. Yet he fought against the diseases of his age, while looking beyond the present to a nobler future.

The philosopher who looks about him to-day is confronted with a frightful atomic chaos. Who will be humanity's knight-errant and raise the true image of man again in our hearts? So long as we strive after happiness as the goal of life, so long do we live a mere animal existence. The true incarnations of mankind are the philosopher, the artist, and the saint. These are the most nearly perfect men, and we must battle against everything which retards or opposes the creation of great men. We must battle against every selfishness in ourselves as well as in others, and so, freeing ourselves, help to free others. Liberty is the key to the culture of the future, and the man who seeks after selfish happiness travels the opposite road to that of freedom, and ends as a slave, the slave of his own desires.

Such, in brief outline, is the gist of Nietzsche's essay. The human significance of it is very great. Nietzsche has come to grips at last with his problem. He has no longer any illusions about his own desires. He gives them no fictitious values. He does not glorify them.

He knows with devastating lucidity that his problem is one of simple human relationship. The romantic clouds of artistic and philosophic glory which he has woven about his life are now dissipated finally. He knows that he must resist what is plainly and simply an animal desire.

Dionysos at this moment is a lie. Nietzsche is a poor weak man in love with the wife of another, and his love is hopeless of attainment, a dishonour to him if by chance it were attained. He hates Wagner because Wagner is unworthy of his attainment. But Cosima is free to choose, and he may not constrain her freedom.

He must surrender not only hope but desire. Hope and desire make him a hypocrite. Out of hope and desire, in order to please his beloved, he publicly praises and supports the man whom in truth he heartily despises. He must break the vicious circle and become a free man, a creative man independent of fleshly desire, who lives in the light of truth and is no longer a slave to passion, a man whose freedom brings freedom unto the people, a leader and educator of his own time who bequeathes the torch of freedom to the future and dies without ever reaching the Promised Land.

He had diagnosed his disease at last and was therefore advanced halfway toward its ultimate cure. The battle, however, was only beginning, and two years passed before he won his freedom. That freedom left him stripped and battered as a ship after a hurricane. We have now to follow that battle to its conclusion.

XVII

FROM hopeless love, Nietzsche turns to the joys of friendship. He writes a musical *Hymn to Friendship* to console Erwin Rohde in his loneliness. A solemn procession winds in this hymn up the hill to the temple of friendship. Slow sumptuous songs unroll in the limpid air. The languid sadness of unhappy memories dissolves little by little into the joyous resolution of heroes, and distant future horizons attract the view. The future, at least, will be glorious, even though the present seeks to betray us.

Meanwhile, invitations came from Bayreuth which were steadily refused. Nietzsche knew that his secret was known to Wagner, and the Bayreuth plans for his future mocked his suffering. Gersdorff visited Cosima frequently, and Nietzsche was a constant topic of conversation between them. It was decided by Cosima that he ought now to leave Basel, and satisfy his physical needs by marrying some rich woman. Then he might live where he liked. No doubt his choice would fix itself upon Bayreuth. Physically satisfied by marriage, he would be free to devote his time to Wagnerian music.

Gersdorff communicated this plan to Nietzsche who

replied in a mocking tone, advising his friend to practise what he preached. The exchange of letters between them led to a certain coolness, especially when Gersdorff reproached his friend for not coming to Bayreuth. Nietzsche replied with forceful truth: 'Both of us know that Wagner is very suspicious by nature, but I should not have thought it wise to encourage his suspicion.'

When the summer holidays came, he accompanied Romundt to Bergün in the high mountains of the Engadine. There he revised *Schopenhauer as Educator* and felt the nobility of the mountains responding to the nobility of the new ideal he was setting forth. In August, with the essay behind him, he took his courage in both hands and went to Bayreuth.

This visit to Cosima was a bold challenge to fate. It was also to be the test of his views about Wagner. He would observe the Master minutely in the light of what he had already secretly written, and by his keen observation now decide whether Wagner was worthy to stand or fall. As a test he brought to Bayreuth the score of Brahms's *Song of Triumph*, which had deeply impressed him that spring in Basel Cathedral. He laid the book on Wagner's piano and said nothing. Wagner was furious, but concealed his anger for days. One evening he could contain himself no longer and burst into a rage. 'Nietzsche flushed deeply,' Wagner told Lisbeth later, 'and stared at me in dignified astonishment. I would have given a hundred thousand marks to have shown such perfect breeding.'

Nietzsche is always an aristocrat. He is always dignified.'

Nietzsche did not tell his sister a word about this incident, but later, when she questioned him about it he softly murmured: 'At that moment Wagner was not great!' In his note-book he set down the comment: 'The tyrant allows no personality other than his own and that of his intimates. Great is the danger for Wagner when he will not allow any merit to Brahms or to Jewish music.'

His self-control before Wagner on this occasion was no doubt superb, but the incident shook him deeply. He took to his bed immediately, and left Villa Wahnfried for Basel a very ill man.

Fortunately the pressure of university work saved him for the moment, and soon *Schopenhauer as Educator* appeared. Cosima wrote him an affectionate letter full of the most delicate and subtle flattery. Between the lines of the essay she read quite clearly the implications, and warmly applauded him for his new resolutions, though carefully avoiding any definition of them. She insinuated with artful force that Nietzsche's artistic instinct led him in spite of all to the fount of Wagnerian music, and capped the climax by exclaiming: 'This is *my Thought Out of Season*, and I thank you, dear friend, from the bottom of my heart.'

Such a message raised Nietzsche's spirits considerably, and for several weeks he was to be seen at parties in Basel, gaily playing games with innocent jolly laughter, or reading Mark Twain aloud to the

company. Then Christmas came round again, always a fateful time, for it linked itself in Nietzsche's mind to Cosima and her birthday. His customary letter to her on this occasion dampened the cheer at Bayreuth with its doleful greeting. Wagner answered hotly telling Nietzsche it was high time he married. The usual depression followed and on the second of January 1875 he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug: 'Yesterday I beheld the future with genuine terror. It is terrible and perilous to live — I should envy the man who succeeded in dying honestly. I am determined, however, to live to a ripe old age. I have work to do.'

The first two months of the year were months of stagnation. 'Rarely,' he writes, 'for ten minutes once a fortnight I compose a *Hymn to Solitude*, which I shall reveal in all its terrible beauty.'

Cosima, meanwhile, had written suggesting to Nietzsche that his sister should act as mother to her five children while Wagner and she went off on a business tour. She proposed that Fräulein Nietzsche should come at the beginning of February, which would allow her six weeks to get acquainted before their departure.

This was a master-stroke. In six weeks Cosima could explain a great deal to Nietzsche's sister and win her, perhaps, as an ally to her cause. She would explain how difficult Nietzsche was making her relationship with the Master, and persuade her to advise her brother for his own good. Nietzsche, suspecting nothing, warmed to the proposal at once, and wrote

off post-haste to his sister: 'I beg of you absolutely to grant this request. I am sure that our mother will joyfully consent.'

It seemed, however, that Nietzsche's mother was very far from willing. She loved her son passionately, so passionately that she fiercely resented his falling away from received religious opinions. Cosima and Wagner must be the cause of his regrettable free-thinking. She had nursed her dislike of them in silence. Now that her daughter was menaced as well, her smouldering grievance burst into flames. Nietzsche was furious to discover her hatred of Cosima, and was so explosively angry that his mother was compelled to yield. The quarrel made him feel lonelier than ever. He felt that his freedom was menaced in his own family.

Fräulein Nietzsche went to Bayreuth in the middle of February and was charmed with Cosima who took her to pay thirty-two calls. She thought Wagner was an ideal head of a family, and assured him that Friedrich was still absolutely loyal.

Meanwhile more trouble was brewing in Basel. Romundt, who had been Nietzsche's intimate friend for three years — his housemate in fact — announced that he wished to become a Roman Catholic. Nietzsche was the son of his Lutheran mother, and regarded the Catholic Church as the scarlet woman. He told Romundt harshly that he must choose between religion and friendship. There were violent quarrels night after night in the house, and the friends parted for ever.

Nietzsche felt that the action of his friend could only be construed as a base betrayal.

Distressed as he was by his mother and by Romundt, Nietzsche was working very hard indeed. The fragments which remain of his lectures to his students seem to show that he was busily following Cosima's advice to concentrate on his philological work and to write a great book on Greek philosophy. He would devote himself now to science and through science achieve his programme of reform. First of all he would criticize philology as it was understood by his academic contemporaries. He planned a fourth *Thoughts Out of Season* to be called *We Philologists*. This essay was never completed, though Gersdorff kept pressing him to do so. Fragments of it exist, and from these we can see that it served its purpose in defining more clearly to Nietzsche himself the development of his own philosophy.

Nature meanwhile was taking its revenge. In March he went to Lucerne, in May to Berne, for short holidays which he spent in lonely silence. In June he had a complete physical collapse. He was racked by cruel headaches and his eyes could not bear ordinary daylight. His stomach was painfully dilated and refused all food. It seemed to him that the machine of his body had fallen to pieces, and that the end was already in sight. Day by day he forced himself into the classroom. Philology was now his last justification; and if he was suffering from cancer, as he feared, he was determined to die in harness.

July came with its holidays from teaching. All Nietzsche's friends were hurrying to Bayreuth to attend the announced rehearsals of the *Ring*. Nietzsche longed and yet feared to go, and when the doctors forbade it, retired to a little spa in the Black Forest, hidden in a quiet valley among the trees. He still wavered about Bayreuth, which was no great distance from Steinabad, and put off his final decision from day to day. What would Cosima think if he of all men did not put in an appearance? They regarded him, he knew, as a *malade imaginaire*. Yet the doctors told him that there was a deeper cause unexplored behind the periodic attacks which were racking his system. Had not his father died, after all, of softening of the brain?

Whatever his destiny might be, he would face the future with courage and devote all his energy to leaving one great book behind him. He would sacrifice everything to his single task. For years he had written a great deal, most of it a mistake. Now he would be quite silent. There was seven or eight years' work in prospect before he would publish again. Would he live eight years? In eight years he would be forty. His father had died at the age of thirty-six. He must take that risk. He had slandered the moderns, yet he too was a man of his time, with the same wild and inordinate desires as his fellow-romantics. If he was to be the master of the moderns, he must first master his own instincts. 'My youth was my excuse. I craved intoxication. Now my youth is behind me.'

All his friends were gathered at Bayreuth. He envied

and pitied them at the same time. They also ought to have outgrown their childhood. He had a great deal to learn about life, and now he would set about it. Eight years of hard study might teach him a great deal.

He found time to console his friends in their troubles. Rohde was suffering from an unhappy love affair. 'Desperation everywhere! Yet *I* am not desperate!' His affirmation was true. Ill as he was when he returned to Basel, he bore his pain with fortitude and looked into the future with confidence. At this moment, all thoughts of winning Cosima were definitely put aside. He even wrote in October to Malwida von Meysenbug: 'I tell you in confidence that what I now wish for myself is to find a good wife as soon as possible.'

From the middle of August to the end of November, it seemed as if Nietzsche's health had really improved. He was cheerful and hard at work from morning till night, and took long walks in the country with his sister who was now keeping house for him. He learned to find happiness in little things. 'A lizard's rustling, a breath, a wisp of air, the gleam in an eye — little things make great happiness.'

He wrote to Gersdorff that he had a home at last, which was something he had not known since he was a boy of thirteen. In the evening he would read aloud to his sister what he had written in the course of the day, and afterwards extemporize upon the piano, or play the *Hymn to Solitude* he had composed.

It seemed to him then that his health would be restored as soon as he deserved it, that is to say, as soon as he had healed his own mind. Unfortunately he was overstraining his eyes in the joy of his new sense of well-being, and at the beginning of December his sister realized that things could not go on as they were going.

Now that he had a home of his own he took less and less physical exercise. As matters grew worse, he resorted to drugs once more, and his sister dared not oppose him. Just before Christmas he broke down completely, and his doctor informed him that he must stop work and leave Basel.

He stayed in Basel, however, more or less confined to his bed, too weak to make a decision and haunted with doubt about his own mental future. In January he wrote to Gersdorff that he was now certain his malady was a malady of the brain. 'My father died at the age of thirty-six. It is quite likely that events will move even more quickly with me in the same direction.'

By the beginning of March his forced rest led to some improvement and he set off with Gersdorff for Montreux. He wandered about Lake Geneva for a fortnight, and spent a second short holiday at Geneva torn between acceptance and revolt. Revolt took the form of a visit to Ferney where he paid his respects to the spirit of Voltaire. Acceptance took the form of proposing marriage by letter to a young lady from the Baltic whom he had scarcely seen.

As the result of a four hours' walk with her, in which he had recited Longfellow's *Excelsior*, he wrote her a most curious proposal, beginning 'My dear young lady,' and asking her to take her courage in both hands. He states that he is returning to Basel next morning, and that she must decide at once. Fortunately for them both, she promptly refused him, and he replied apologizing for his 'cruel behaviour'.

Nietzsche's sister believes that he was thoroughly relieved by the young lady's refusal. Soon after, Gersdorff wrote that a wealthy young lady loved and revered Nietzsche from afar, and had refused for his sake many offers of marriage. Nietzsche replied that he was never going to be married, and loved freedom much too passionately ever to be tied.

Meanwhile Wagner's old friend, Malwida von Meysenbug, who seems to have had for Nietzsche a kind of half-Platonic, half-maternal affection, suggested that he should spend the next winter with her on the shores of the Italian Mediterranean. The idea pleased him and he played with it for a time. Doubts and fears intervened to banish it then, but out of this suggestion came in later years Nietzsche's adoption of Italy as his second country.

On the 21st of May, he broke a long silence and wrote a letter to Wagner for his birthday. The letter was guarded and double-edged with meaning, but on the surface it appeared to be a warm tribute. Wagner replied politely but somewhat coldly.

Neither he nor Cosima knew on what work he was

now engaged. Had they known, they would have felt much uneasiness. He was writing *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*. It was finished in June, and published some days before the first Bayreuth festival which opened about the middle of July. He sent separate copies to Wagner and Cosima, each with a special letter. The original letters have been destroyed, it is claimed, but Nietzsche retained rough drafts of both, which are extraordinarily revealing.

Bayreuth as a symbol meant everything to Nietzsche. Bayreuth as a fact meant very much less. It seemed to him that he was called upon to judge it. Would it mean what the tragic theatre had meant to the Greeks? In Greek tragedy the dramatist was the voice of an awakened people whose enthusiasm inspired him to reflect their heroism. Was Germany inspiring Wagner in this manner, and was Wagner great enough to be so inspired? Where was the Dionysos who should descend among the people and kindle tragedy among them?

Dionysos was not in Wagner's soul. Perhaps he was to be found in the soul of Nietzsche. If such were the case, who was the man of destiny? To whom, in that case, did Bayreuth itself belong? To whom, in that case also, did Ariadne belong?

Such are the unspoken questions in Nietzsche's essay. Bearing this in mind, we shall understand Nietzsche's letters to Wagner and Cosima much more clearly.

To Wagner he wrote: 'Here, dearest Master, is a

kind of sermon for the festival at Bayreuth. I have been unable to keep silence. I was compelled to open my heart. If there are men who at present *rejoice*, I shall certainly have added to their joy. How will you yourself accept these professions of faith? This time I make no effort to discover. . . . I am dizzy and confused when I think of what I have dared on this occasion, and it seems to me that I shall have the fate of the knight on horseback who crossed the Lake of Constance.' He alludes to a horseman in one of Kerner's ballads who crossed the lake on the ice without knowing it, and died of fright on the other side when he had discovered what he had done.

The tone of this letter is clear enough. It is an unequivocal challenge to Wagner. He adds that the Bayreuth he has described in his essay has grown up in his mind since his boyhood and has never changed. In other words, it owes nothing to Wagner and can and does exist outside Wagner entirely.

To Cosima he wrote in a very different tone. Only a fragment of the letter has been published, and the rest is left to indefinite surmise. He says that he has written the book to give her a little pleasure, that his only hope is that here and there he has divined her joy and expressed it with his own joy, and that nothing more beautiful than that could he possibly wish for.

Cosima replied at once with a telegram so direct and clear that it must have seemed to Nietzsche as if victory were at last almost in his grasp. 'I owe to you, dear friend, to-day, the only consolation and edifica-

tion that I experience after the strong artistic impressions here. May this suffice to you as my thanks. Cosima. '

Wagner fell headlong into the trap and wired: 'Friend! your book is tremendous! Where did you get this experienced knowledge of me? Come soon!' Nietzsche went post-haste to win his victory. Unfortunately, he presumed too much on his potential godhead, as we shall see presently when the curtain rises.

XVIII

WHAT was this essay which roused so much interest at Bayreuth? On the surface, it seems a rapturous hymn to Wagner. In reality, it is a rapturous hymn to himself. It is in this light that he thought Cosima Wagner had read it when he received from her the telegram expressing her thanks. In later years, he made his meaning quite clear. If we turn to *Ecce Homo*, we shall find him saying with the utmost precision: 'The treatise on *Richard Wagner at Bayreuth* is a vision of my own future,' and on an earlier page of the same book: 'In describing Dionysian music, I described what no one but myself had heard; instinctively I translated and transfigured all things, according to the new spirit in my breast. The strongest proof of all this that I can furnish is my essay on *Richard Wagner at Bayreuth*: in every clearly psychological passage in this book the reader may substitute my name, or 'Zarathustra', wherever Wagner's name appears in the text.'

You will remember that in Nietzsche's boyhood and youth he dramatized himself as the Dark Hero, a kind of Byronic Prometheus, a Manfred, a Lucifer who would storm heaven for power and usurp God's throne. This lonely Hero recurs in Nietzsche's essay.

It is he who is sometimes called Wagner, sometimes Zarathustra. He is really Nietzsche's self-portrait, revealing the old ambition, which had stirred to life for a time in *Empedocles*, which he had fought against for years, and which now possessed him once more as his familiar demon.

Wagner-Nietzsche showed no promise of his future in childhood, he tells us. He was a bundle of traits which roused no hope, but rather provoked dismay. Restless and excitable, nervously anxious to undertake a hundred things at a time, in love with morbid mental exaltation, and ready to change in an instant from calm to violent uproar, he was totally undisciplined and unconstrained. His home environment and his education were such as no one would choose for an artist's development. There was every fear that he would become a dilettante.

When manhood dawned with its moral and mental strength, it was the prelude to his spiritual drama. 'Then how different everything became! It seemed as if one awful stroke had simplified his nature, and divided it against itself into two instinctive domains. From its deepest heart welled out a passionate will like a flooding stream from the mountains, trying to make its own way through every path and gorge and ravine in its quest for light and power.'

Opposing this was 'a spirit full of love and quiet faith, full of goodness and utterly boundless tenderness, which hated all violence and personal deterioration and to whom the sight of a soul in chains was

an abhorrence.' 'This dual nature divided against itself constituted the Hero's personal drama.

'How restlessly and darkly the man began; how stormily he sought to quench the thirst of his desires, to win power and to taste the rapture of those delights from which he would as often flee in disgust; how he longed to fling off his yoke, to forget, to be nothing, and to renounce all desires!' This may be a portrait of Wagner, but it is certainly an even better portrait of Nietzsche.

Then, he says, the star of unselfish fidelity rose and shone steadily above him with melancholy force and vehemence. 'Why did this star seem the brightest and purest of all stars? What secret meaning had fidelity to this man's whole being? . . . It was his realization of the fact that the two sides of his nature were faithful to each other, that out of his free and selfless love the creative, innocent, and glorious side kept loyal pace with the dark, the unruly, and the tyrannical side.'

Only by maintaining these two sides of his nature in exact and equal poise, could he remain wholly and truly himself. This poise was beyond his powers. More and more, temptation and danger beset him. Was faithfulness really possible at all? The doubt depressed him, and he took refuge in art. Yet art might also betray. 'Worse still, art is taken seriously more or less, and is expected to rouse a sort of hungry craving, and to fulfil its mission by excitement artificially aroused. It is as if men feared to sink under the

burden of their own loathing and ennui, and conjured up every imaginable evil spirit to frighten and harry them like stampeded cattle. Men starve for pain and anger and hatred, hot passion, hasty flight, and breathless suspense, and summon the artist to conjure this army of demons.' The very kernel of Wagner-Nietzsche's strength is his 'demonic magnetism and his ability to impart himself to others.'

He is tempted to confront the whole of life with haughty mockery, while his other side has the craving of the heights for the depths. 'Then, whenever he considers all that he misses as a lonely creator, it seems to him that he ought to descend to the earth as a god, and bear up to Heaven in his fiery arms all the weak and human and lost, *so that he may obtain love, and not only mere worship, and so lose himself entirely in his love.*'

The italics are mine. Do these words refer to Wagner? Not the utmost stretch of imagination can apply them to anyone else but Nietzsche. They are his *Liebestod*.

'When the central rule of his life gained control of his mind — the idea that drama, among all the arts, was the one that could most powerfully influence the world — it stirred the most living emotions of his whole being . . . The idea was then only a kind of temptation — it expressed his dark, selfish, insatiable will, hungry for power and glory. Power — the greatest quantity of power — how? over whom? — henceforth these questions and problems absorbed his mind and his heart incessantly. He longed to conquer and triumph

as no other artist had conquered and triumphed before, and to conquer the peak of omnipotent tyranny at a bound, the peak for which every instinct in his soul secretly craved.' The cross currents in his nature struggle and foam and roar convulsively, 'and suddenly, at the end, the whole broad torrent plunges into the depths, and rejoices as a demon over the abyss.'

Then more than ever he needs the free, fearless man, who is able to accomplish alone without assistance what is beyond even the powers of a god. That man appears when his will is broken and doom seems very near. The free and fearless man opposes all established morality. His parents, who were united in bonds of marriage against nature, perish, and Siegfried lives. He forges the sword, kills the dragon, gains possession of the ring, and awakens Brunhilde.

The ring fulfils its curse on him, so that out of love he wounds that which he most loves, is wrapped in guilt, rises out of that guilt shining more gloriously than the sun itself, and sets in a glory which fires the very heavens. The god who has been defeated by Siegfried, the free man, is now himself free by reason of his defeat, free through love, free from himself for ever.

Such is the riddle which Nietzsche presented to Cosima and Wagner. What wonder that he was exultant when he received Cosima-Brunhilde's telegram? And Wagner-Wotan was summoning him to Bayreuth in a telegram which implied that Nietzsche had penetrated his secret.

The stakes were tremendous. Could Nietzsche-Siegfried succeed in breaking Wagner-Wotan's spear, then Wagner-Wotan, the god, might abdicate and place his power in the hands of the youthful victor, the power of the *Ring*, which he himself had created, the power which would win him Bayreuth, Brunhilde, and love.

NIETZSCHE went to Bayreuth at the end of July. The mental reaction from his first exaltation had set in thoroughly. When he arrived he was 'will-less, hopeless'. Two days later he wrote to his sister that he almost regretted he had ever come. He sat through the rehearsals in stony silence, bracing himself in the thunderous heat for his final interview with Wagner when he would stake all on a single cast and put his fate to the proof.

Wagner was everywhere, rushing hither and thither, a jovial tyrant, threatening and cajoling, all things to all men, absorbed in his practical efforts. On the first of August he spoke at a formal banquet to all the singers and musicians assembled there. His words of self-praise rang out in triumphant assurance, as he claimed that the new art which they were now serving would raise up governments in no distant future.

How could Nietzsche hope to gain a victory over a man so triumphant already in the steadfast self-assurance of his own power? Nietzsche's sister was puzzled by the second letter which came from her brother almost immediately. 'I must keep very much to myself and refuse all invitations, even invitations from

Wagner.' Wagner meanwhile was asking: 'Why does Nietzsche make himself so scarce?'

Nietzsche spent day after day walking up and down Malwida von Meysenbug's garden fighting his demon who sought to arouse his courage. Finally he fled to the baths of Klingenbrunn. He had learned in the past few days the plans of the Master. *Parsifal* was to declare Wagner a Christian. First Romundt, now Wagner — and also Cosima. This Christian faith was the seductive enemy. Was Wagner then so cowardly after all?

And what of Cosima? Was she the Kundry who would lead him to such imposture? He would resist all seductions now from whomsoever they came. The world needed him now that the Master was mad. 'I shall restore to men the serenity which is the foundation of all culture. And the simplicity too. Serenity, Simplicity, Greatness.'

Once more, as in his childhood, youth, and early manhood, Nietzsche had run away. He saw it clearly and, mastering his fear, returned to Bayreuth for the first public performance.

He was present as an incorruptible judge. All he had dreamed and written of Richard Wagner was present before him as he sat in the theatre, as he wandered about the streets, as he watched the hum and stir of the festival. Was this tawdry comedy the climax of his dreams? Was it for this that he had laboured, for this that he had renounced, for this that he had suffered as no man should suffer? He would be

brave enough now, at least, to admit that he had lived in a world of delusion, that this was worse than nothing, that it was actually the betrayal of the Holy Ghost.

Bayreuth was a beer-swilling orgy of vulgar bourgeois drowned in the heady brew of sensual music. Did not Wagner, or even Cosima, realize what a brutal farce it all was? Surely Cosima could not have understood, after all, what he had written for her to read between the lines of the little book he had sent her.

Was she, too, the dupe of this meretricious comedy? Did the festival seem to her the crown of her labours? Was this debauch of colour and light, this garish triumph of scene-painting, the art of the future as she conceived it, the spirit of music out of which the tragedy which redeems the race was to be born?

Even the music assaulted the nerves and stupefied the creative imagination. Brunhilde, as played by Madame Materna, was epileptic obscenity. Yet with it all Wagner seemed thoroughly pleased. Sick at heart, Nietzsche said good-bye to his sister before the cycle was over. 'Ah, Lisbeth, and *that* was Bayreuth!' he cried, and as he uttered the words his eyes filled with tears.

He suffered now from the inescapable knowledge that Cosima and Wagner had forgotten him. He was lost to them now for ever. He had gone to Bayreuth hoping against hope itself that Wagner would become his disciple and so lift art up to a tragic plane. Instead,

the Master had neither ears nor eyes for his philosophy, and Cosima, far from being an awakened Brunhilde, was bound to the Master for ever by silken chains.

THE physical reaction of Nietzsche was complete. Throughout that month of September 1876 he sat in his darkened room at Basel with atropin in his eyes, tortured by neuralgia and the darkest melancholy. This neuralgia, he wrote to Wagner, seemed designed to test his utmost capacity for suffering. Recurring at intervals of four or eight days, it lasted without respite for thirty hours. Aided by Paul Rée, a young philosopher who had been a friend of Romundt, and by Heinrich Köselitz, a young composer and pupil better known by his *nom de guerre* of Peter Gast, he sought a refuge from memory in work, and dictated notes for a fifth *Thoughts Out of Season* to be called *The Free Spirit*.

It was soon only too clear that he must rest completely, and the University of Basel granted him a year's leave of absence from the first of October 1876. A fortnight at Bex was free from pain and suffering. To those who would have us believe that Nietzsche's illnesses had a physical basis amenable to medical treatment, it may be pointed out that whenever a holiday begins or there is a prospect of freedom, Nietzsche's pains disappear completely for a time.

About the 19th of October he set forth for Italy,

invited to join Malwida von Meysenbug for an indefinite stay at her villa in Sorrento. This kindly old Egeria who had lived through crowded lifetimes of muddled idealistic experience was unselfishly fond of Nietzsche, and he responded gratefully to her hospitality which made no claims.

Crossing the Mont-Cénis he had two ladies as fellow-travellers in his first-class compartment. He was attentive to their comfort with that formal but unstudied courtesy which strangers always remarked in his demeanour, and presently found himself engaged in animated conversation with his younger companion. The memory of this evening remained radiant with Isabella von Ungern-Sternberg in after years.

In the morning they went to the same hotel at Genoa. Nietzsche was exhausted and spent twenty-four hours in bed. The following evening he guided them through the unknown city. He had never seen it before, but it seemed familiar and friendly to him. This happy evening, recalled in later years, may have led him to settle in Genoa where he wrote *The Dawn of Day* and *The Joyful Wisdom*.

He sailed from Genoa, and after a stop at Leghorn, whence he made an excursion to Pisa, arrived at Naples on the 27th of October. Malwida von Meysenbug received him at Sorrento, and the six months he spent at the Villa Rubinacci saw the framework erected of his new philosophical system.

The Wagners, to his surprise, were already installed at the Hotel Victoria, which was five minutes' walk

from the villa, and it seems that Nietzsche called on them on the day of his arrival. So far there was no open break in their friendship. Indeed, Malwida von Meysenbug is said to have told Nietzsche's sister that the meeting was joyful on both sides, and that the two men sought each other out every day as if nothing had occurred to weaken their deep friendship. Nietzsche saw Cosima six times that month to our knowledge. Bayreuth was tacitly avoided in their conversation. The festival had closed with a huge deficit, and Wagner was no more anxious than Nietzsche to allude to the subject.

On the last evening of Wagner's stay at Sorrento, however, he went for a farewell walk on the hill with Nietzsche. It would seem that Cosima excused herself and stayed behind. The wintry light in the sky betokened farewell, and Wagner began to speak of *Parsifal*. To Nietzsche's painful surprise, he referred to it as a religious, rather than an artistic, experience. He went on to confess that he was leaning toward Christian belief, and spoke of the delight he experienced in the Communion service. The Tribschen atheist was clearly turning Catholic.

As Wagner spoke, the sun disappeared and a light mist spread over the landscape. He turned to Nietzsche and asked him why he was silent. Nietzsche did not answer, and they walked quietly home. He withdrew to his room, and did not appear that evening. Wagner and Nietzsche never met again.

The villa which Malwida von Meysenbug had

chosen for her little intellectual academy was outside the village in a network of high-walled gardens. It looked out on two terraces, one facing the mountain, and one looking over the blue sea toward Ischia. Nietzsche's large room had a private balcony. An orange grove led to the cliff overlooking the sea. To the north clouds hovered over the cone of Vesuvius. Empedocles knew that Ariadne lived close by.

The little group installed in the Villa Rubinacci was congenial, and they respected each other's privacy. Malwida von Meysenbug, now sixty, was a kind mother who sought to put her three friends entirely at their ease. Her unquestioning acceptance of all men and women as equals distressed Nietzsche's aristocratic instinct at times, but he was deeply grateful to her for her thoughtful kindness. Her youthful friend Albert Brenner was gentle and fond of Nietzsche, who pitied Brenner because he saw death in his eyes. Paul Rée, who had accompanied Nietzsche from Switzerland, was also thoughtful and kind, and assisted him to copy his manuscript notes. It seemed as if the nucleus of Nietzsche's ideal academy were already in existence, and their common life together lent substance to the illusion.

The climate of Sorrento suited his nervous malady. In the morning he worked in his room undisturbed. In the afternoon he walked alone or, if he chose, joined the others on a little excursion. In the evening, after dinner, the four friends read aloud or conversed in the drawing-room. Paul Rée was the preferred

reader on these occasions, and the books he read gave rise to pleasant discussions. Occasionally all four drove off for the day on a picnic to Vico or Caserte or the headland near Capri. Once Nietzsche put on a mask and joined with boisterous glee in the Carnival at Naples. At other times he made long day excursions by boat or on muleback, but paid for them with neuralgia and nervous exhaustion.

Each of the four companions was writing a book. Malwida von Meysenbug was busy with her reminiscences, Brenner was composing short stories, Rée his book *On the Source of Human Emotions*, and Nietzsche the book we know as *Human, All-Too-Human*. When Rée's book was completed, he dedicated it to Nietzsche and inscribed in the copy which he sent him these words, 'From the mother to the father of this book, in grateful memory.' The two men, in fact, influenced each other fruitfully at the time and afterwards. So much may be admitted without embarking upon the useless and acrimonious discussion which has arisen about the priority of their respective ideas.

In November, about the time that the Wagners said good-bye to Sorrento, the sad news reached Nietzsche's ears that his old Leipzig master, Ritschl, was dead. He remembered now with regret and bitter remorse the arrogant letter which he had written to the old philologist, and felt that he had been ungrateful to a great man in deserting Ritschl's banner for that of Wagner. For weeks he brooded over the moral problem which was thus presented freshly

to his mind and, aided by Malwida von Meysenbug's clear perception that his future path was that of philosophy and literature rather than that of philology and research, slowly but surely he came to his final decision that philosophy, not philology, should be his future mistress.

Meanwhile Nietzsche's health had its ups and downs. The prostrating neuralgia was recurrent, though less frequent and lengthy in its visitations. He began to feel that he was travelling on the right road toward freedom and self-discovery, and was thus far reassured about the future. The doctors he consulted disagreed in their diagnoses, but a German doctor at Naples in February 1877 frankly expressed the opinion that unless Nietzsche took the greatest precautions, and entered immediately upon a special regimen, his brain would soon weaken into paralysis. So he assured Nietzsche, who heard the news with courageous demeanour and decided that if this were true he would work as hard as he could to leave an abiding monument behind before the inevitable disaster overtook him.

Meanwhile week followed week of quiet labour. Rée and Brenner had each finished his work, and now that winter was passing into spring, it was time to think at last of turning northward. On the 10th of April, Rée and Brenner departed. Nietzsche remained alone with Malwida von Meysenbug for three weeks longer, accompanied sometimes on walks by a young disciple, Baron Reinhard von Seydlitz, and his

Hungarian wife, who were staying for a short time near by. In the evening Nietzsche sat by the fire and talked to Malwida about Christianity, stigmatizing it as unhealthy and musty with the odours of the tomb.

One evening he brought her a packet of manuscript containing the notes he had set down on paper that winter. In these she discovered a Nietzsche she had never suspected, a positivist Nietzsche who shared no longer her romantic Wagnerism. She sought to reclaim him by affectionate argument, but this only made him feel uncomfortable, as if he could satisfy the wishes of his hostess only by becoming untrue to his own ideal. He felt that it was time to leave and, on the 7th of May, parted from her with forced animation. Seydlitz and his wife accompanied him to Naples, and saw him on board the steamer to Genoa.

THE weather was rough, and Nietzsche had a painful voyage. Dreamy and self-absorbed, he lost his luggage. His fatigue and neuralgia compelled him to rest in Genoa, and then he set forth for Switzerland to cross the St. Gothard. From Genoa to Milan he rode with a lively little ballerina, and he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug from Lugano that he was vexed with himself because he had not stayed at Milan a few days, at least, for her sake. His luggage was found at Lugano, and there he stayed for a short time where *The Birth of Tragedy* had first begun to take shape.

Continuing northward, he tried the curative effects of the baths at Ragaz, where he spent two or three weeks debating the future. His brain fatigue seemed invincible, and he worried about his immediate future plans. Ought he not to resign his University chair? Could he do it justice in future? Yet this chair was his chief financial resource. After all, perhaps his troubles were due to the lack of necessary sexual satisfaction. Malwida von Meysenbug, prompted, I suspect, by the Wagners, had repeatedly counselled him during the previous winter to marry a nice girl with a dowry who could support him, and Nietzsche had interposed no strong objections. His

sister held the same views, and perhaps they were right. He had resisted temptation at Milan, and now perhaps he was paying for it. He asked the faithful Overbeck's advice about what he should do about the University of Basel. Overbeck sounded the authorities, but could not return a definite answer.

Meanwhile the oppressive heat of Ragaz was more than he could bear, and on the 10th of June he went to Rosenlauri, high above Meiringen in the Bernese Oberland. He passed twelve relatively tranquil weeks in this sheltered mountain spot, except for a fortnight at Zug from the 9th to the 23rd of July, which he spent with his sister discussing the question of his marriage and scholastic future. She was pressing in her view that he should return to teaching. Malwida von Meysenbug, when she heard what his sister had counselled, exclaimed: 'Poor Nietzsche! I am sorry for him!'

On the 19th of September he returned to Basel, where he was joined by his sister. They lived together at 22 Gellertstrasse until the 30th of June in the following year. During these months Nietzsche resumed his professorial labours, while Peter Gast faithfully transcribed the note-books his master had filled so assiduously at Sorrento. To Malwida von Meysenbug Nietzsche wrote announcing his decision. Music and philosophy had ruined him. He would be a scholar. He wanted to be a teacher once more. If the labour was too much for his forces, he would at least die at his post.

This definite decision, as usual, brought temporary physical relief. Nietzsche plunged into work with enthusiasm, and for a short time all seemed to go well. Then the old neuralgia recurred with shattering violence, and it became clear that he must be partially released from his University duties. He was relieved of his oral teaching, and for the rest of the winter his health faintly improved. It was evident to him now, however, that ultimately he must leave Basel.

Meanwhile, with the valuable assistance of Peter Gast, the book we know as the first part of *Human, All-Too-Human* was rapidly progressing. It was finished on the 20th of January 1878. Fifteen days earlier the libretto of *Parsifal* arrived. It would seem that Nietzsche never acknowledged its receipt. He wrote to Seydlitz the next day that there was more of Liszt than of Wagner in it, and that it incarnated the very spirit of Counter-Reform. It was fleshless, but reeking with blood, and he disliked hysterical women.

Andler has well pointed out how bitter Nietzsche must have felt at his double defeat. Cosima was the daughter of Liszt, and through her Kundry-like sorcery, Liszt had converted Wagner to Christianity. Nietzsche had wanted Cosima for himself, but he had also wanted her to conquer Wagner, so that the Master should be the instrument by which his own dreams might be immortalized in music. Now he swore to himself that he would deserve her even in his very hopelessness. He finished his book and sent it to the printer.

His pains increased, and it was with the utmost difficulty that he continued his University work till the Easter holidays. He spent his vacation in solitude at first at Baden, where he went for the cure. The end of April he passed with his mother at Naumburg, correcting the proofs of *Human, All-Too-Human*.

The book appeared on the 30th of May. It was dedicated to the memory of Voltaire, whose centenary it was. On that very day an anonymous donor sent him a bust of Voltaire from Paris with these words: 'The soul of Voltaire presents his compliments to Friedrich Nietzsche.' The mysterious sender was never discovered. Could it have been Richard Wagner? Nietzsche's book was a secret till the day of publication, but Schmeitzner was Wagner's as well as Nietzsche's publisher. He often visited Wagner at his house, and Nietzsche's secret may have been betrayed.

The gift moved Nietzsche deeply and seemed to him prophetic. Was he destined to be so hated throughout his lifetime and for a century after his death? It seemed very likely. He wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug on the 11th of June: 'The destiny of a man about whom, even after a century, there are partisan verdicts appeared to my eyes as a terrible symbol. But I shall go along my road in silence; I shall renounce every hindrance. I stand at the crisis of my life.'

His friends were embarrassed by the book and inclined to be silent. Rohde blamed Rée's supposed

influence. Burckhardt was noncommittal at first, though he professed to admire the book later. Only Rée was warmly enthusiastic. What would Wagner and Cosima say? He had sent them an early copy. They said nothing directly. They did not even acknowledge the book. To Overbeck, Wagner had written: 'I shall do him the kindness *of not reading* his book . . . One day he will be grateful that I have not read it.' Wagner also confided to Overbeck that he believed Nietzsche to be insane.

As the weeks passed in silence, Nietzsche came to realize that the definite break with Wagner had come at last. 'I feel,' he said, 'as if I had recovered from an illness: I think of Mozart's *Requiem* with ineffable joy. Now once more I relish the savour of simple food.'

All might have been well if Wagner had kept silence in public. Unfortunately, however, he chose to allude to Nietzsche and his book in stinging terms in the *Bayreuther Blätter* which he was publishing at that time. Nietzsche was not mentioned by name in the article on *The Public and Popularity*, but the allusion was only too clear. Philologists, dried up by the poverty of their subject, now found themselves obliged, Wagner said, to indulge in unbounded criticism of things human and inhuman. They felt licensed to abandon all the previous opinions they had ever held, to fall back in confusion, and to revolve on their own orbits for ever. The noblest victims were to be immolated on the altar of their doubt, and genius was to be thrown overboard as a fundamental error. Wagner concluded by sneer-

ing at these Goliaths of knowledge who acknowledged no reality that was not visible from their University chairs.

The news of Wagner's attack on him reached Nietzsche at Interlaken at the beginning of September. 'This has wounded me,' he wrote to Overbeck, 'but not in the spot in which Wagner intended.' To Seydlitz he wrote that the split was bound to have come. His sense of loneliness was now extreme. His sister also had now parted from him, alienated in a measure, as she confesses, by his complete repudiation of Christianity. They could not live under the same roof without quarrelling, and after a frank discussion of the situation we are told that they agreed that it was better to part.

After Interlaken, Nietzsche went on to Naumburg to see his mother, and also to discuss the Wagner situation with his sister, who offered to approach Cosima and attempt a final reconciliation. The two women exchanged letters, but it was too late, and Nietzsche's sister claims that Cosima accused her brother of treachery. This may very well be believed. At any rate, Wagner and Cosima were now lost to Nietzsche for ever.

In 1882 Nietzsche's sister went to Bayreuth to hear *Parsifal*, and Wagner, we are told, asked her for an interview. As she was leaving him, he said softly: 'Tell your brother that since he left me I have been alone.'

Did she tell him? It would seem so, for in that very

year he wrote an aphorism called *Starry Friendship*. 'We were friends and we have become strangers. But that is well, and we will neither conceal nor obscure it from ourselves, as if we ought to be ashamed. We are two ships, each with a course and a goal . . . It was our law that we were to become strangers . . . We will have faith in our starry friendship, even though on earth we were bound to be enemies.'

WE have now to consider *Human, All-Too-Human*, for this book marks the transition from Nietzsche's first to his second philosophical period. His life-work falls into three definitely marked stages. In the first, which is represented by all his published work before *Human, All-Too-Human*, he is Dionysian. Under the influence of Schopenhauer and Wagner he is an idealistic pessimist worshipping energy, the Dark Hero who would be God. In the second, which is the period of *Human, All-Too-Human*, *The Dawn of Day*, and *The Joyful Wisdom*, his pendulum swings to the opposite Apollonian pole. During this time he aims to be a scientific realist, forswears Dionysos and denies his divinity, and seeks for balance and measure in a classical manner. In the last period, ushered in by *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, he reverts to Dionysos with redoubled energy, and identifies himself with the God whom he would displace. The pendulum swings back to the point from which it started.

In *Human, All-Too-Human* Apollonian calm is sought, but never attained. The book, which is written in the form of brief aphorisms, is therapeutic in purpose — in fact, an extended exorcism. We see Nietzsche struggling successfully to free himself from the net of

Wagner and Cosima, to disintoxicate himself from the heady brew of romantic sorcery. The victory is won for a time, but at a terrible cost. Such suffering as this is holy, and the man who wrestles thus with his dark angel and gains the battle is to be revered for ever.

Human, All-Too-Human is a cruel book, cruel toward Wagner, cruel toward Cosima, cruel toward himself. Nietzsche never spared a friend at the expense of an ideal, but he was always and equally his own severest judge. The self-laceration of a Swift and a Pascal is relentless, but the self-laceration of Nietzsche is supreme. Driven by an imperative inward necessity, he judges himself with the stony eyes of a gorgon, and it is only by his own standard of self-judgment that those whom he loves themselves must stand or fall.

We have the draft of a letter which he intended sending to Wagner with this book in the course of which he says: 'I find myself in the state of mind of an officer who has carried the redoubt. Though wounded he stands on the heights and waves his flag. He has far more joy than pain, though whatever he sees around him is terrible.'

Toward the end of his creative life he wrote in *Ecce Homo* about this book: 'Examining it a little more closely, you will see a soul without pity who knows all the hidden crevices where ideals usually creep to hide — where they find their prisons and last refuges. Torch in hand, with a light which never flickers, I light this lower world with rays that cut like swords . . . Error after error is quietly put on ice; the ideal is never

exploded—it is frozen. Here, for example, “genius” is frozen; there “the saint” is frozen; under a heavy icicle “the hero” is frozen; and finally “faith” itself is frozen to death.’ So Lucifer in hell, the fallen Son of the Morning, would freeze to death the fire of his life which burns but never consumes.

His need is terrible, for he is bankrupt. He is bankrupt of Schopenhauer, bankrupt of Wagner, bankrupt of Cosima, bankrupt of himself. His disillusionment has nearly killed his soul. He had poured the torrent of his generous idealism into philology, and the philologists sneered at him. He had poured it into the Franco-Prussian war, and the new bourgeois Prussia, greasy with false elation, mocked the cause for which his old regiment had fought. He had poured it into the cause of Wagnerian music, and Wagnerian music was proven false and self-seeking. He had given his heart to Cosima, and she had rejected it. His soul was fouled with longing and jealousy. He would kill his soul if he could and be a scientific man. The moral man was no nearer the *primum mobile* than the physical animal. He would analyse the genius, the saint, the hero to nothing. If there were a residuum, from that alone perhaps he could build a new world. Meanwhile, he would invent ‘free spirits,’ though they did not exist and never had existed, to keep him cheerful in ‘illness, loneliness, foreignness, and *accidia*.’ He would defy himself and thereby create his opposite.

‘Sometimes the saint defies himself in a manner which is closely allied to domination at any price,

and which gives a sense of power to the loneliest man. Sometimes his distended sensitiveness rushes from a longing to give free rein to his passions, to a longing to tame them like wild horses under the mighty force of a proud soul. Sometimes he longs for an utter end to disturbing, painful, irritating sensations, a waking sleep . . . Sometimes he longs for battle and rouses it within, because ennui yawns in his face. He lashes his own self-worship with cruel contempt. He revels in the mad tumult of his desire and in the keen pangs of sin itself, nay, even in thought of being utterly lost. He knows how to trap his emotions, even his passionate love of domination . . . Finally, if he hungers after visions, talks with the dead or with the gods, fundamentally it is a rare delight which he seeks, that delight in which all other delights are one.'

That is not sanctity as the saints have sought for it. It is the wolfish hunger of Satan who would devour God. My will, not Thine, be done, is its litany chanted in a hell of everlasting absence. Nietzsche is possessed by the Son of the Morning who speaks through his mouth the words he would eternally utter. The drama of this man's life is his battle with his demon, bravely fought to an end which no man knows.

With giant stroke, after giant stroke on the anvil, he forges these aphorisms out of his dearest substance. The terrible strangling silence of this battle hushes all around it as he strives to kill every love and belief he has held. His savage irony points against himself, against Cosima, against life itself, yet this hate is

inverted love, it is passionate anguish crucifying its own sublimities in its pain. And out of this anguish was to dawn a pale battered calm, a respite from his own possession. Lucifer left him, and he found himself, as we shall see presently, convalescent in the sun.

After Naumburg, Nietzsche returned in October 1878 to his lectures at Basel. He was not accompanied by his sister, who appears to have quarrelled with the Overbecks, Nietzsche's truest friends and protectors thenceforward. It is of little concern to us to settle the controversy between Frau Förster-Nietzsche and the friends of Overbeck. We may recognize a profound incompatibility of temper and leave it at that. The Overbecks fought for Nietzsche's relative freedom and won the battle. To no man more than Overbeck was Nietzsche indebted.

His health at this time was wretched, and frequently interrupted his university work. Pupils fell off till one day he had only a single auditor in his classroom. He had taken rooms in a house in the outer suburbs, and entered upon an insane vegetarian regime. Overworked and exhausted by long vigorous walks in the country, he sought to live on vegetable soup, figs and dates, fruits and biscuits, and rapidly lost the remains of his physical strength. He spared his eyes, it is true, for Overbeck and others read to him, and a Frau Baumgartner replaced Peter Gast (who had gone to Venice) as his amanuensis. She wrote out the second part of *Human, All-Too-Human* for him, and when the

proofs of the book were ready, Peter Gast corrected them. The volume appeared in March 1879.

Nietzsche's neuralgia returned with redoubled tortures, and he believed that he was marked for death. It seemed to him that he was toiling on the last book he would ever write. March came and he could toil no longer. He applied for a short leave of absence, which was granted. At Geneva, he had time to ponder over his situation. How could he live if he gave up the chair at Basel which it was increasingly clear to him that he could no longer hope to hold? His private means amounted to a thousand francs a year. This sum could not pretend to support him, even in the greatest indigence. It was his faithful friend Overbeck who came to the rescue. Overbeck counselled him to resign, and trust to fortune, and negotiated on Nietzsche's behalf with the authorities at Basel.

On the 2nd of May Nietzsche sent in his resignation. The government of the Canton accepted it on the 14th of June, and the council wrote him a letter of grateful thanks. The authorities of the Canton and of the University, by means of three separate annual grants, contrived to assure him an annual pension for his lifetime of three thousand francs. This sum, added to his own humble patrimony, made a modest existence possible to Nietzsche without labour, and it is thanks entirely to Overbeck that he received it.

Nietzsche left Basel on the 12th of May, and spent three weeks at Bremgarten with his sister, before ascending into the high Engadine. At Wiesen and St.

Moritz he found himself calm, and it seemed to him that this was his 'Promised Land.' The calm and euphoria he enjoyed quickly vanished, however, and he left oppressed by 'the nightmare of existence.' He called for Overbeck, who now hastened to him. A few days' surcease from pain, and the horror was renewed. He stayed in the Engadine till September came, and his new book, *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, was completed. Then he forwarded his manuscript to Peter Gast.

'My very dear friend,' he wrote, 'you will have my manuscript before you receive these lines. Perhaps you will share somewhat of my pleasure as I contemplate my work which is now completed. I have reached the end of my thirty-fifth year — "the middle of life", as folk . . . used to call this age. It was at this age that Dante had his vision . . . Now I am in the middle of life and so "circled with death" that at any moment it may seize me. To judge from the nature of my sufferings I must count upon a *sudden* death in convulsions. . . . And so I feel as if I were a very old man, all the more because my lifework *is now finished*.'

The letter from which I have quoted was written at the beginning of September. This date is extremely significant if we recall the death of Nietzsche's father. Pastor Nietzsche was born on the 10th of October 1813. He met with his fatal accident at the end of August 1848. He died on the 20th of July 1849. His death was 'quick' and 'spasmodic.' Nietzsche himself was born on the 15th of October 1844. At the

time of this letter, his age to the very day, as nearly as we can calculate, was that of his father when he fell on the doorstep of the parsonage. Nietzsche, therefore, is now making ready to die. He will die, he thinks, on the 25th of July 1880. Is not this the germ of the Eternal Recurrence? He will die at home with his people. As he writes to Peter Gast, 'There are conditions in which it seems to me more suitable to go back to one's mother, one's home, and the memories of one's childhood.'

And so he set forth for Naumburg, a journey which proved nearly fatal to him in the way he had foreseen. There is a conflict here once more between loyalties, a conflict between his friendship for Overbeck and his blood-kinship with his mother and sister. The battle between these two loyalties was fought out in his heart. For the time being, blood-kinship won, and he descended into a new and terrible spiritual hell.

At Naumburg he had hired a large room in a tower on the ramparts and leased some land which he proposed to till. Like Voltaire's hero, he must cultivate his garden. It was the suitable end for a life of suffering. He found it impossible in the bitter northern winter. The sun-glare on the snow blinded his eyes. The damp air oppressed his nerves. December was a month of unbearable mental and physical anguish, a month in which he fought the hardest fight of his life and emerged victorious.

In 1879 he aged ten years in a single twelvemonth. He explored pain to the utmost cream of the bone (he

had one hundred and eighteen crises of pain that year), and conquered it by exerting his will to self-mastery. The Will to Power overcame the will to die. That battle, once won, was incessantly renewed till the fatal January nine years later when the worn-out spirit succumbed, but this first great victory determined all the others.

To himself he seemed to exist as his own shadow, the shadow of all he had been and all he had hoped for. At Christmas he published *The Wanderer and His Shadow* and was certain that the end of his life was very near. On the 14th of January he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug: 'I want you to have one more letter from me . . . — it will be the last. The terrible unrelieved martyrdom of my life makes me long for death, and there are signs which tell me that I am near enough to the feverish attack, which will save me, to live in hope. I have suffered so much and renounced so much that no ascetic has ever lived throughout the ages with whose life I am not entitled to compare my own during the past year. I have gained a great deal. My spirit is purer and sweeter, and no longer needs religion or art to make these gains . . . Many people will be guided by my example toward a higher, clearer, and more serene life . . . Have you any good news of the Wagners? . . . They also have forsaken me.'

His hour, however, had not come. Paul Rée and the first signs of spring now brought consolation, and Peter Gast called to him from Venice bringing

news of the warm South. So he bade farewell to Naumburg and travelled southward. On the 12th of April he left directly for Bozen. He avoided Basel on his journey, 'that infamous town.'

XXIV

ON the 13th of February, 1880, Nietzsche came to Riva on the shores of the Lake of Garda, and spent a quiet month at the Hotel du Lac, then called the Villa Tempe. During the last week of his stay, Peter Gast joined him and played Chopin for his pleasure. Nietzsche sought for relief from German music as symbolized by Wagner, and the Polish blood which he believed to run in his veins made him welcome the work of this great Polish composer. Pain drove him away from Garda, and he followed Peter Gast home to Venice on the 12th of March. Venice was to become one of his favourite dwelling-places, and Peter Gast the only friend in his lifetime with whom he never quarrelled.

Since 1878 Peter Gast had besought his friend to come and make his home in Venice. He had lived there in happy comfort on a modest income, and had grown to love the city with all his heart. The younger son of a prosperous Prussian father, he wished to live a quiet Bohemian life of creative work, and refused to accept aught but a tiny competence from his elder brother, a comfortably situated land-owner. This modern Franciscan bestowed his small income on the poor, and starved cheerfully for the sake of his unfortunate

brethren. Once he lived for a week on water. During the cold Venetian winter he was without a fire. Nietzsche was almost as poor as he, but Gast would never accept a farthing from his friend. His tact avoided every sign of irritation in Nietzsche. His love was prodigal in unostentatious care. Nietzsche's life between now and 1889 was dependent on him and on Overbeck, who managed Nietzsche's poor finances with watchful prudence.

In physical appearance Peter Gast resembled Wagner. As time went on Nietzsche came to believe that his new friend was the future hope of German music. Gast's music replaced that of Wagner in his heart as Gast's face replaced that of the fallen Master. He was a timid man, inverted and full of self-doubt, hypochondriac but of the utmost gentleness. As time went on he became Nietzsche's most faithful disciple. His faith comforted Nietzsche in his darkest hours. His patience waited on Nietzsche, and it is by his quality of self-sacrificing friendship that he deserves to be remembered for ever.

After a fortnight in the Casa Fumagalli near San Marco, Nietzsche moved on the 27th of March to the Palazzo Berlendis on the Fondamenta Nuove. He had a large room overlooking Murano and Torcello and the Isola San Michele, that 'isle of the dead' which he describes in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. The charm of Venice won him to complete surrender. He loved its solitudes, its lights, and its healing shadows.

Did he know that Wagner was also in Venice that

spring? If he did, he gave no sign. He was absorbed in sharing Chopin's music with Peter Gast, reveling in its simplicity after Wagner's heady brew of sensuality.

In Chopin, as in Venice, he found 'sublimity, deep warm light, and the joyousness of the highest logic.' The phase of 'joyful wisdom' slowly emerges on the shores of the Adriatic during that bright spring. His creative impulse was now thoroughly awakened, and *The Dawn of Day* began to take shape in his note-books. It seemed to him now that the instincts controlled the intellect as well as the moral sense, and he began to believe that truth is a relative function. He wrote joyful verses, praising the Piazza San Marco, and his mood for a time returned to a lyrical childhood.

By the end of June, the heat and mosquitoes distressed him, and he wandered northward through Austria till he came to Marienbad. At this time, the famous Bohemian watering-place had not been discovered by the great travelling public, and it ought to have been a quiet retreat for a philosopher. He lodged in the neighbouring forest and took long solitary walks for ten hours a day.

But he was not destined to find peace. One night he was roused by an uproar in the hotel. Gendarmes filled the house, searched it from top to bottom, and found a press for printing forged banknotes. All night a woman moaned in the next room. Nietzsche changed his hotel, and set to work once more, filling his note-books with the thoughts which came to him on his

walks. The peasants came to know him as 'the sad Swiss professor.' He would speak only to the children he met on the road.

He mourned for Wagner and Cosima, whom his philosophy, he now thought, had alienated. What philosophy was worth causing sadness to a human heart? Yet was it not absurd that a man might not share with others his most precious and intimate possession for fear of losing their sympathy? '*Hinc meæ lacrimæ!*' he exclaims in a letter at this time to Peter Gast. One day a stranger who passed him in the forest stopped and gazed at him steadfastly. All at once, Nietzsche realized that his face must be expressing radiant happiness, and that for two hours he had walked through the forest close to this man.

September found him at Naumburg again for a few weeks, which he spent quietly with his mother and sister. We have no idea why he returned there, or what happened. He had written to Gast that the Overbecks would be there. Did he endeavour to reconcile them with his sister from whom they were estranged? I find nothing to indicate the fact in the published Overbeck papers or in his sister's various narratives. He took country walks with his sister, who noted signs of quiet satisfaction on his face, but he does not seem to have confided in her, and she did not know on what work he was engaged at this time.

He left Naumburg on the 8th of October, travelling south through Frankfort and Heidelberg to Basel where he paused to visit the Overbecks. From Basel

he went over the St. Gothard to Locarno and on to Stresa on Lago Maggiore where he lingered in pain until the 8th of November. He wrote at this time to Overbeck that the sight of his friend's dignity and grace before life at Basel, as well as that of Jakob Burckhardt, had profited him much as an example. Let this testimony be chronicled to Overbeck's honour and set against all Weimar imputations. It is abundantly substantiated over and over again in Peter Gast's letters to Overbeck at this time. No biographer of Nietzsche can overestimate the value of the philosopher's two watchful guardian angels, Franz Overbeck and Peter Gast, in those lonely years.

Stresa was cold and foggy and Nietzsche felt old. The beauty of Lago Maggiore in the late autumn was ethereal, thin, and chill. It spoke to him with appealing sadness, and it seemed to mirror the melancholy of his own heart. He left on a sudden impulse, and arrived in Genoa on the 9th of November.

No other city could have responded more admirably to Nietzsche's need. It released the creative springs of his imagination, it soothed his torment, it humanized his loneliness. He was happy there, as far as he could be happy. He found an attic room in the upper city at 8 Salita delle Battistine. 'To get to my room,' he writes, 'I must climb one hundred and sixty-four stairs in the building, and the house itself is high up in a steep lane of palaces. As the lane is so steep and ends in a long flight of stairs, it is very still, and grass is growing between the flags.'

Nietzsche loved to walk in these quiet hilly lanes, to pause and watch the children playing their little games, or to climb high up outside the fortifications and behold the great city steeply descending the hills to the harbour and the blue Mediterranean waters. The confused murmur of Genoa rose softly from below, the peaceful Campo Santo reposed nearby, and the ships in the harbour set forth on strange voyages as Christopher Columbus had set forth over an unknown ocean. It seemed to him as if he too were a new Columbus embarking for strange landfalls he knew not where.

On other days he would follow the road to the sea and, passing San Francesco d'Albaro, come to Sturla and the rocky cliffs which bordered the Mediterranean. 'Here is the sea,' he wrote in *The Dawn of Day*. 'Here the town may be forgotten completely. The bells, it is true, are ringing the Angelus — that solemn, foolish, sweet sound between day and nightfall — but hark a moment! Now everything is silent. There lies the ocean, shining and pale; it is voiceless. The sky glows with immemorial silent evening colours, rose and lemon and emerald; the sky also is voiceless. The little cliffs and ledges which lean out into the ocean, as if each would find the loneliest spot of all — they too are voiceless. Full of beauty and awe is this vast silence, conquering as suddenly and swelling our heart with its charm . . . Shall man become as you are now, shining and pale, voiceless and vast, calmly reposing upon himself — exalted above his own nature?'

Or again he asks, pondering we may suppose, upon Christopher Columbus: 'May it not be that men will one day say of us that we also steered westward, in the hope of attaining our India — but that destiny wrecked us on the shore of the Infinite? Or, my brothers? Or——?'

Nietzsche lived as a simple hermit among the poorest people of Genoa. Here, for the first time, he discovered the simple of heart. He came to love them in his shy, silent way, and they returned his affection, while respecting his silence. He shared their joys and sorrows and was sometimes asked to settle their little disputes. They knew how he suffered and were edified by his patience. Soon he was known to them all as 'Il Piccolo Santo'. They even brought him blessed candles to light his evenings. When his landlady asked if he suffered, he would say, '*Sono contento.*' He lived simply on *pasta asciutta* and vegetarian fare, cooking his own meals or going to a humble *trattoria* at an hour when he could be sure that he would be almost alone.

The winter of 1880-81 was one of the most productive in his whole life. His pain left him longer intervals for labour, and during these months he wrote *The Dawn of Day*. On the 26th of January he sent the manuscript to Peter Gast for transcription, and in February added a supplement which Gast also gladly transcribed. On the 13th of March the book went to the publisher.

Nietzsche was impatient to see it in print before he left Genoa. It was the first fruit of the new life which

had been given him. Remembering his father's experience, he had expected to die in July 1880. Miraculously, as it seemed, he had been spared. In his joy, he would call his new testament by a symbolic title. This 'decisive' book would be called *The Dawn of Day*.

He had kept the book a close secret from everyone except Peter Gast and, possibly, Overbeck. On the 10th of April he told the news to his sister. On the 30th he left Genoa to join his friend Peter Gast. Between them they would correct the proofs and enjoy a holiday of sunlight and music. They met at Vicenza and went on to Recoaro.

This little inland watering-place was a favourite resort of Italian musicians. Buried in pines, a series of cascades descends to green fields watered by little streams. Blue hills rise softly to a clear azure sky, and cool air makes the night clement in early summer. Nietzsche had need of repose. He had overworked, carried away by creative enthusiasm. Now Peter Gast played Chopin and his own music for his friend.

After a month, he left Nietzsche alone in this valley. The proof-sheets came, and Nietzsche read them with a sense of elation and exalted discovery. He wrote to his sister that this book would render the name of the Nietzsches immortal. His euphoria was soon to lead him to his greatest crisis when at Sils-Maria he was blasted with excess of light one moonlit evening.

WHEN *The Dawn of Day* was published, Nietzsche wrote to his mother and sister asking them not to read it. His mother consented, but his sister refused this request. He therefore endeavoured to distract her attention from its intimate personal confessions by asking her to read between the lines of the fifth book. This ingenious request was successful in achieving its end. The fifth book has very little autobiographical interest. The others are full of personal revelation. They have never been examined, however, in the light of Nietzsche's relations with Cosima. Now that we have the clue to this labyrinth, it will be found that *The Dawn of Day* sheds a great deal of light on this subject. Let us, therefore, examine some passages in it rather closely.

First of all, there is an aphoristic paragraph entitled *Dissimulation as a Duty* (No. 248). 'Falsehood, if not the mother, is at least the nurse of kindness.' We have already studied Nietzsche's dissimulation with Wagner during and after the Tribschen period. Was Nietzsche false to Wagner in order to be kind? So it would seem, and yet at first sight we should suppose that he was practising a very dubious kindness. This kindness of which he speaks must therefore have been a deliberate

concealment from Wagner of something other than his suspicious contempt.

Does another aphorism (No. 408) shed any light on this secret? I think it does. 'Where a great deal of kindness is necessary.—Many natures have no alternative but to choose between being either public sinners or secret bearers of sorrow.' Did Nietzsche really have the choice of living in sin with Cosima or of living alone in sorrowful renunciation? It would seem as if, like Malvolio, he thought so.

Another aphorism (No. 321) brings the solution of the mystery rather nearer. 'Innocent folk are each victims of every circumstance, since their ignorance prevents them from knowing the difference between temperance and excess, and from being on guard when it is necessary against their own desires. Hence innocent, that is to say, ignorant young women become habituated to enjoy frequent sexual intercourse, and miss it very much in later life when their husbands are ill or become prematurely old.' Wagner, it will be recalled, was twenty-nine years older than Cosima, and Nietzsche was younger than Cosima by six years.

Was Nietzsche aware of the chance which life seemed to offer him? His body thrilled with it, and it possessed his dreams. 'How does it happen that in one dream I enjoy inexpressible musical beauty, and in another dream I soar and fly upwards with the happiness of an eagle to the farthest heights.' (No. 119.) Wagner, Nietzsche believed, was Geyer, and, as he

says somewhere, where there is a *Geyer* (vulture), an eagle (*Adler*) is never far off.

But we may approach the solution of the mystery much more closely. Let us examine the paragraph entitled *Probable and Improbable* (No. 379). 'Once a woman loved a man in secret, raised him high above herself, and said to herself hundreds of times in her secret heart: "If such a man were to love me, I should regard it as a condescension before which I must humble myself in the very dust?" And the man felt the same emotion toward the woman, and in his secret heart he had the identical thought. At last they both spoke and told each other of their most private thoughts. A deep silence of meditation followed. Then the woman spoke coldly: "It is perfectly clear! Neither you nor I are what we loved! If you are the man you say, and nothing more, I have vainly humbled myself in loving you; the demon led us both astray." This probable story never happens. Can you tell me why?'

What did happen? It would seem, in the first place, that Cosima declared her love, and that Nietzsche guarded her secret. Wagner is made to speak in meditation in another aphorism entitled *The Former Panegyrist*. (No. 259.) 'He is silent about me now, though he knows the truth and could tell it if he would; but it would sound like the voice of revenge — and he values the truth so highly, this honourable man!'

Brutus withholds the truth from the Bayreuth public, but some truth was once spoken by Nietzsche to

Wagner. Witness the aphorism on *Deceit in Humiliation*. (No. 219). 'By your folly you have done your neighbour great wrong and ruined his happiness beyond repair — and then, after overcoming your vanity, you have humbled yourself before him, yielded your folly to the laughter of his contempt, and you imagine that after this trying scene which you found extremely painful, everything has been put right again, and that your willing sacrifice of honour repays your neighbour for his ruined happiness. You bid him farewell in the comfortable belief that your virtue is now re-established. Your neighbour, however, suffers as much as before. He is not comforted by the thought that you have owned to an irrational impulse, but rather remembers how painfully you appeared as you humbled yourself in his presence — it was as if you had wounded him yet again. Yet he has no thought of revenge and no idea how to right the balance between you. As a matter of fact, you were acting that scene for yourself as an audience: you asked a witness to be present, not for his sake, but only for your own — don't deceive yourself!'

Whatever truth Nietzsche spoke to Wagner on this unknown occasion, it was not complete and left Cosima uncompromised. 'Ah, no one among you knows how the tortured man feels after he has been put on the rack, when they carry him back to his cell and his secret with him! He holds it still in a tenacious unyielding grip. What do you know of the exultation of which human pride is capable?' (No. 229).

The Dark Hero proceeds to explain this exultation. Speaking of *Macbeth* he says (No. 240.): 'The man who is really possessed by a burning ambition rejoices to see this portrayal of himself. When his own passion hurls the hero toward destruction, that is the hottest spice in the pungent brew of his delight . . . It is only from the moment of his great crime that he becomes 'demoniacally' attractive and urges like-minded men to copy him. Here is something demoniac, which rebels against life and good fortune in favour of thought and impulse. Can you suppose that *Tristan Und Isolde* are designed to warn us against adultery, because adultery brought about the death of both? '

Revelation was incomplete between Wagner and Nietzsche, for neither knew himself well enough to understand the other. Witness the paragraph entitled *Two Friends* (No. 287). 'Once they were friends, and now they are friends no longer. Both men broke off their friendship at the very same time, one because he felt that he was too grossly misunderstood, the other because he was understood but too well. Yet both were in error. Neither man knew himself sufficiently well.'

Now Nietzsche, broken on the wheel, has understanding. 'Have pity' on him! Leave him alone in his solitude! Would you crush him completely? He was cracked like a glass into which some one suddenly poured too hot a liquid — and he was such a precious glass!' (No. 478, entitled *Let Us Pass Him By.*)

Nietzsche has understanding, but he can never for-

get. 'If only it were not so very hard to forget! Once upon a time there was an exceedingly proud man who never accepted under any circumstances anything from others, whether it was good or evil. He would only accept from himself. But when he wished to forget, he could not give himself that. Three times in his need he had recourse to the spirits. They came and hearkened to his wish and said at last: "This is the only gift that is beyond our power!" . . . We never forget what we try hard to forget.' (No 167.)

Nietzsche longed to end his existence, and mastered his passionate desire for suicide by considering what grief it would bring to his mother and sister, and what self-reproach to Wagner and Cosima. (No. 109.) Suffering and pain of body brought new knowledge, and helped to cure him. There is passionate self-knowledge in aphorism No. 114.

'The condition of the invalid who has suffered long and terrible tortures in his illness, and whose reason has remained unaffected by it all, is not without value in our quest for knowledge — apart from the intellectual gain which follows from every deep loneliness and every sudden justifiable liberation from duty and routine. He who suffers profoundly gazes with the awful calm of his suffering upon outer things: those little deceitful mirages, which surround everything seen by a healthy man, disappear from the eyes of the sufferer; even his own life stretches before him bereft of all blossom and colouring. Should he have lived by chance until then in a kind of perilous dream, this utter dis-

illusionment through suffering is the way, and perhaps the only way, of winning for him his freedom. . . . The tremendous tension of the mind that wills to stand firm against pain reveals everything to the eye in a quite new light, the ineffable charm of which is sufficiently strong oftentimes in opposing the very seduction of suicide to make life seem extremely desirable to its victim . . . He regards contemptuously his noblest and dearest illusions of former days. He delights in summoning this contempt from the pit of Hell, so inflicting the sharpest pangs upon his soul. By this counterbalance he endures his physical pain — such a counterbalance seems to him necessary now. In an awful moment of lucid self-knowledge he says to himself: "For once be your own accuser and executioner. For once look upon your pain as a sentence which is self-inflicted! Revel in your own superiority as a judge: nay, better, revel in your own will and pleasure, your own arbitrary self-tyranny! Uplift yourself above your life as well as your pain, and look down from above into the abyss of reason and folly."'

Nietzsche goes on to say that his pride defends life against the tyranny of suffering, and against pessimism as a reputed result of suffering, which would humble him as a conquered subject of pain. No excuse will serve him. He admits of no excuses. He needs no excuse. He plunges into 'orgies of pride.' Then relief first appears. He turns against his own pride. He humiliates it after it has helped him to con-

quer. He seeks for an antidote and cries that 'this pride is only a new illness, a new convulsion.' He turns once more to humanity and to nature, seeing both in a new light, seeing both transformed. 'In this condition we cannot listen to music without tears.'

In this new euphoria Nietzsche is happy for the moment. 'These silent, dark, evil men have something personal which you cannot take away — a rare and exotic pleasure in *dolce far niente*: a sunset and twilight peace that can only be savoured by a heart which has often been gnawed, torn, and poisoned by the passions.' (No. 256: *The Happiness of the Evil Ones*.)

Nietzsche would be an anonymous confessor now, easing the souls of the sinful. (No. 449.) 'To live unknown, or even a little ridiculed: too humble for envy or hatred; with unfevered brain, a little knowledge, and a wallet of experience; ministering to the poor in spirit, helping those here and there who are troubled with thoughts, unknown to them after one has helped them; not anxious to justify oneself in front of the patient, or to win a victory! To say to him such words that after a brief, scarcely noticeable objection he may discover the right for himself and stride proudly away! To be like a humble unknown inn where no necessitous traveller is ever rejected, but which afterwards is forgotten and laughed away! To have no advantage over other men — no better food, no clearer air, no more cheerful mind — but to give away everything always, to return every gift, to become poorer and poorer every day!

To know how to be humble so that many may find one and none be humiliated! To take much injustice on one's back and to steal through the crannies and crevices of every sort of error, so that we may come to many unknown souls in their secret ways! To have always some sort of love, some sort of egoism and self-pleasure! To have power, and yet to be secret and content! To warm oneself in the sunlight and sweetness of grace, but to know that the ladder is nigh which stretches up to the sublime! That would be life indeed! Such a life might well be indefinitely long!

And so by winding roads he comes to his new philosophy, half of St. Francis and half of Epicurus. (No. 553.) 'Where does this philosophy tend on all its winding roadways? It simply transmutes into reason a settled and very strong instinct — a longing for the gentle sun, a bright bracing climate, southern vegetation, sea air, simple meals of meat and eggs and fruit, hot water to drink, peaceful walks all day long, little conversation, infrequent cautious reading, a hermit's existence, pure simple habits like those of a soldier — a longing in other words, for what suits my private taste, a philosophy based on the instinct of a personal routine — an instinct which craves my air, my height, my temperature, and my sort of health, and which takes the winding road of my brain to lead me to it at last!'

At Sils-Maria this philosophy will leave him.



Exclusive News Agency

COSIMA WAGNER

ON the 4th of July 1881 Nietzsche came to Sils-Maria in the Engadine. For two years he had longed to return to these high mountains, to breathe the pure air of the summits, and to revel in their voiceless solitude. He had regarded *The Dawn of Day* as the book of a convalescent. Now that it was finished, it seemed to him that he was privileged to turn toward more serious labours, and it was his hope and belief that in this high Alpine valley inspiration and strength would come to him for the fulfilment of a greater task than he had yet undertaken. He had won to freedom, he believed, and now he would use his freedom.

He found a quiet room in a peasant's chalet near the bridge of Fex. It had one window looking out on the mountains. He took his meals nearby at the Hotel Edelweiss. In the mornings he worked in his room. From noon till four he took solitary walks in the valley. From four till seven he returned to his work. After supper, he walked up and down his room in meditation till midnight, when his landlord often interrupted his reveries by complaining that he was keeping the family awake. On his walks he would meet and converse with the pastor and the schoolmaster, and he was fond of stopping the children on the road and

laughing with them and sharing little secrets with them. As he returned to the village summer after summer, the people came to love and revere him. He is still remembered by old people in Sils-Maria who speak of him with compassionate affection.

As he walked the roads of the valley day by day, the sense of solitude wrapped him closely about. Heretofore he had always welcomed the coming of a friend. Now an increasing sense of dedication possessed him, and when Paul Rée thought of joining him in his retreat, Nietzsche was much agitated and charged his sister to dissuade him. He felt that he was on the eve of momentous happenings. Sils-Maria itself was 'an eternal heroic idyll.' Early in August the heroic crisis came.

The date of this turning-point in the life of Nietzsche so far has not been accurately determined. He tells us in *Ecce Homo* that it occurred in August. A letter to Peter Gast on the 14th of that month leads us to suppose that it has already happened. Can we not date it, after all? I think we can.

From the passages which I shall presently quote from *Thus Spake Zarathustra* it is clear that his vision came to him about midnight in the light of the full moon. It was full moon that year at Sils-Maria at 9.43 p.m. on the 9th of August. The moon rose behind the mountains at 7.38 p.m. It set at 4.38 a.m. on the 10th of August. It would have been directly overhead at 12.08 a.m. on that day.

I suggest that Nietzsche walked out after supper on

the night of the 9th of August, and that just after midnight, when the tenth of August had come and the moon had risen clear of mist and cloud, his vision came to him in the following manner. He was walking through the woods by the lake of Silvaplana when he came to Surlèj on the shore of the lake. The natural monolith still stands in its pyramidal form where he paused and surrendered himself to meditation. How long he sat silent there we do not know. What happened then we have never been directly told. In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche simply states that he then conceived the fundamental idea of the Eternal Recurrence, and that he noted it down on a scrap of paper, subjoining the words: 'Six thousand feet on the other side of men and time.'

On the 14th of August, however, he wrote in exaltation to Peter Gast: 'Well, my dear friend, the sun of August shines on us, the year slips on, calm and peace spread over the mountains and forest. I have seen thoughts rising on my horizon, the like of which I have never had before, but I wish that nothing may cause them to be divulged and I hold myself in resolute unshaken calm. I must live a few years longer. Ah, my friend, sometimes I feel a presentiment that the life I lead is a life of supreme peril. I am one of those machines which sometimes *explode*! The intensity of my emotion makes me shudder and burst out laughing. Several times I have been unable to leave my room for the ridiculous reason that my eyes were swollen — and why? Each time I had wept too much on my walk

the day before, not sentimental tears, but actual tears of joy. I sang aloud and cried out foolish things, I was filled with a new vision in which I forestalled all other men.'

What happened to Nietzsche that night by the rock of Surlèj? What transcendent experience made him feel reborn? It is possible, I think, to reconstruct the picture. It will be recalled that about two years before, when Nietzsche had nearly arrived at the age of thirty-five, he feared that a calamitous end was imminent. At the same age his father had fallen on doorstep one night, having tripped over a pet dog as he was returning home. It seems as if he feared a *recurrence* of what happened to his father. He is categorically clear about his fears at that time in writing to Peter Gast. '*It was at this age,*' he says, '*that Dante had his vision.*' He survived the day on which he foresaw his crisis, and in the joy of this unexpected respite he wrote, as we know, the aphorisms of *The Dawn of Day*.

But he still feared at times the fulfilment of his inheritance. His father had died, after all, of an illness of the brain. His mother was anxious and fearful about it, and discussed his mental health in her letters to him. As late as the middle of July that year he wrote to her from Sils-Maria: 'My cerebral malady is very difficult to diagnose . . . But I wish in spite of everything to be my own physician.' His father's illness, therefore, might still *recur*. The danger would be greatest if circumstances *recurred* which would put him in mind of his father as he had known him.

From Nietzsche's own work we can prove that these very circumstances did recur on the memorable night of his vision, and that they contributed to his exaltation and even created it. What were those circumstances, and how did they hark back to his childhood memories of his father? Let us turn to *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and we shall see.

'So spake I ever more softly, for I feared my own thoughts and behind-thoughts. Then suddenly I heard a dog howling near me.

'Had I ever heard a dog howl so? My thoughts hurried back. Yes! In the days of my childhood, the days of my earliest childhood!

'— Then had I heard a dog howl so. And seen it as well, with bristling hair, its head lifted, shivering in the stillest hour of midnight, when even dogs believe in ghosts.

'— So that it aroused my pity. For just then the full moon stole, silent as death, over the house; just then it stood still, a glowing sphere — at rest on the flat roof as if on some one's tenement . . .'

'Woe under me! Whither has time sped away? Have I not sunk into deep wells? The world is asleep. . . .

'Ah! Ah! The dog howls. The moon shines. Rather will I die than utter to you what my midnight-heart is now thinking.

'I have died already. It is over. Spider, why are you spinning your web around me? Will you have blood? Ah! Ah! The dew is falling, the hour is at hand. . . .

'The hour in which I freeze and congeal, which keeps asking and asking and asking: "Who has sufficient courage?"

'—"Who is to be the master of the world?"'

'Had I dreamed? Was I now awakened? Between rugged rocks I suddenly stood alone, desolate in the most desolate moonlight.

'*But there lay a man!* And there! The dog, leaping, bristling, whining—now he saw me coming—then he howled again, he *shrieked*:—had I heard before a dog shrieking so for help?

'And truly, what I saw, the like had I not seen before? A young shepherd I saw, writhing, choking, shuddering, with twisted face and a black heavy snake hanging out of his mouth . . .'

'Who is he who must one day come?

'*Who* is the shepherd into whose throat the snake had crawled? *Who* is the man into whose throat all the heaviest, all the blackest will crawl?

'—But the shepherd bit, as my shriek had warned him to bite; he bit with a good bite! He spat the snake's head wide away:—and then up he sprang. . . .

'No longer a shepherd, no longer a man — a transformed, an aureoled being, who *laughed*! Never before on the earth had a man laughed as *he* laughed!

'Oh, my brothers, I heard a laugh that was the laughter of no man — and now a thirst consumes me, a longing that nothing will still.

'My longing after this laughter now consumes me: oh, how can I bear to live still! And how could I bear

now to die! — (*Wie ertrage ich nach zu leben! Und wie ertrüge ich's, jetzt zu sterben! . . .*)

'Thus spake Zarathustra.'

So Isolde spoke once to Nietzsche, you will remember. '*Wie ertrug ich's nur, wie ertrag' ich's noch?*' (How did I bear it then, how do I bear it still?)

The picture is clear. Nietzsche went for an evening walk in the cold sharp air. He lingered, as was his wont, by the rock of Surlèj. The rock was a pyramid. The Pyramids were tombs. Tombs made him think of death, death made him think of his father. He was ill and faint, but exalted by the frosty air. He sat by the rock in silent meditation, as it was his custom at this time to surrender his thoughts to the night. The stillness by the water's edge was quite unbroken. He sank down lower and lower in the cold till he lay on the ground. He lost consciousness. A dog passed and sniffed at his prostrate figure. He did not stir, and the dog howled in alarm, for it seemed as if the figure were dead.

The howl half roused Nietzsche and suggested to him a dream. His father was lying on the ground with blood streaming out of his mouth. It was not his father. It was he who was lying there. He opened his eyes, and the moonlight streamed over the lake in unearthly glory. The dog howled in terror again at seeing him move. Nietzsche looked down on himself. He was his father's son, the son of the pastor, the shepherd. He lay there in moonlight glory. The event he had seen as a child had recurred just as he had fore-

told, just as the stars circled overhead in their everlasting courses. He would not die. This was an eternal instant.

He rose and wept tears of joy and laughed in supreme exaltation. He had risen from the dead. He was transformed. He was a god. Aureoled in moonlight with the emerald aureole of Dionysos as he had appeared to Ariadne, he laughed as no man could laugh, with a divine laughter.

Next morning the vision had faded. He was a man, consumed with thirst for his departed godhead. The memory of that exaltation and glory lingered, as the words of Isolde had lingered in his mind. The joy of his godhead had been unbearable, yet the memory of it made it unbearable for him to die.

NIETZSCHE stayed on at Sils-Maria till the first of October. His exaltation left him and gave way to depression. Three times he struggled with the temptation of suicide, and three times he resisted it. Did he foresee the inevitable end of his cerebral malady? We do not know. Cold weather came in the Engadine and the first snow fell. He had intended to go to Germany that autumn, but he changed his mind. He travelled directly to Genoa instead. Genoa was cold and wet, and thoughts of suicide still lingered. *The Dawn of Day* had appeared in the summer and it had been ignored completely. His friends were greatly disappointed with it. Burckhardt did not hesitate to say so. Rohde had not even acknowledged its receipt.

With November fine weather returned and Nietzsche's spirits were correspondingly elevated. He resumed the long walks he had taken the year before, over the hills and along the coast by Sturla. The climate was unusually warm for the time of year and he bathed in the sea from a natural grotto. This weather lingered through a halcyon January, commemorated in the fourth book of *The Joyful Wisdom*. It was calm, dry, and cloudless. Olive and peach trees were in flower. Nature shone with the unearthly light which only the convalescent perceives, and

Nietzsche's elation responded to this light in nature. 'Here at Genoa,' he wrote to his sister, on the 29th of November, 'I am proud and happy, all *Principe Doria!* — or Columbus? I wander on the heights, as I did in the Engadine, with songs of joy and a glance into the future such as no man before me ever yet has dared . . . Believe me: the loftiest peak of reflection and labour in Europe is within me at this hour.' This lyrical mood persisted for several months, and it is during this time that *The Joyful Wisdom* was, for the most part, rapidly composed.

Two nights before the letter to his sister from which I have quoted, he had an experience which influenced his philosophy and gave him very great pleasure. He heard Bizet's *Carmen* sung by Madame Galli-Marié at the Politeama Genovese for the first time. It moved him to tears, and he knew that he had found the antidote he required for Wagnerian music. This music was classical and honest. Its passion was graceful and clear. It was disciplined, clean and healthy. And the story was not unlike the story of his own life. This love was innocent and accepted fatality. It was free of life and death, and it had no fear. It lived dangerously and knew how to guard its secret. Its irony was the tragic sense of life in men and in peoples. The last words of that tragedy in themselves were the paradox of his own life: 'Yes, I have killed her, my Carmen, my Carmen, whom I have adored.' Life, then, was innocent, yet cruel, even when fate knocked at the door for the third time.

For five years Nietzsche had fled from music in fear. It touched him too near the quick. It endangered his reason. Only at Recoaro that spring had he indulged in it a little. Now *Carmen* exorcised his fear. He was so much nearer freedom and self-possession in consequence. When Nietzsche's sister and Overbeck sought to reconcile him presently with Wagner, it was useless. Wagner's music now lay in dusty chambers of the past. '*Carmen* has delivered me,' he wrote long afterwards.

As the year drew quietly to its close, Nietzsche faced a new crisis, lighter it would seem than was usual at that time. Christmas was Cosima's birthday, and every year, as the day came round, it brought back old sufferings. St. Sylvester's Day, New Year's Eve, was also an anniversary, that of the *New Year's Idyll* which he had written for Cosima. Each New Year's Eve it was his custom to examine his conscience and to make wishes for whose fulfilment he hoped in the coming twelvemonth. By New Year's Eve this year he had settled his crisis. The record of his victory, written that night, remains. It is embodied in the fourth book of *The Joyful Wisdom*.

'I am still alive, I still think: I must live still, for I must think still. *Sum, ergo cogito: cogito, ergo sum*. To-day every man may express his wish and his dearest thought: I, too, shall express my secret wish and the thought which is most secretly mine this year — a thought which must be the foundation, the guarantee, and the sweetness of all my life from this day on! More

and more I desire to see necessity as beauty: thus shall I be among those who make everything beautiful. *Amor fati*: from now on let that be my love! I do not wish to accuse, I do not even wish to accuse the accusers. *To look away*, let that be my only denial! In a word: I desire to be always a Yea-Sayer!

Amor fati! From now on this sums up the ideal of his life. He will look away from Cosima and face life. Beauty is necessity. Necessity is beauty.

‘That is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.’

With that principle in his mind he wrote at this time about Wagner the paragraph on *Starry Friendship* which has been already quoted. ‘We were friends and we have become strangers. But that is well . . . It was our law that we were to become strangers. . . . We will have faith in our starry friendship, even though on earth we were bound to be enemies.’

Yet he wondered about the future, wondered whither his *amor fati* might lead him. ‘Tempests are my peril. Shall I encounter the tempest in which I shall perish, as Oliver Cromwell perished in his tempest? Or shall I flicker out like a candle, not blown out by the gale, but grown tired and self-weary — a burnt-out candle? Or shall I blow myself out, so that I *shall not burn out*?’ Let us remember this question when we come to January, 1889.

In February his friend Paul Rée joined Nietzsche for a few days. They walked together on the hills and

even made a brief excursion to Monte Carlo. When Rée left to join Malwida von Meysenbug in Rome, Nietzsche became restless. He longed for a life of adventure, for Biskra and Mexico, for warfare and sacrifice. The two friends had spoken of *Parsifal* which was to be produced at Bayreuth in the following July. Did they also speak of marriage again as the solution of Nietzsche's troubles? It would seem so. *Parsifal* and marriage would reopen Nietzsche's old wounds. He fell ill, and a doctor recommended that he should go south. At the beginning of April he landed at Messina to spend the summer, he believed, in Sicily.

He had voyaged on a rough sailing ship and had been very sea-sick. At one time the captain had thought he was going to die. Once ashore, however, he was happy. His dangerous elation recurred as he walked by the sea in the keen salt air. It seemed to him as if an invisible friend attended him everywhere predisposing everyone in his favour. The illusion persisted. He sang aloud and wrote poems which he shouted to the sky as he walked along the roads. These poems are now to be found in *The Joyful Wisdom* where they are gathered under the title of *Songs of Prince Free-as-a-Bird*.

In one of these poems, called *The Mysterious Boat*, he seems to recall his vision at Sils-Maria. In the evening, he tells us, he could not sleep, and therefore he rose in the windless stillness and walked by the edge of the water. In the moonlight he saw a man and a boat

on the sand. Both were drowsy, and the boat stole out to sea. Did an hour pass then, or was it eternity? He does not know. Thought and sense both vanished in a trance of indifference. Fathomless abysses opened. Then the vision fled. It was morning. The boat rested becalmed on the water. 'What had happened?' everyone shrieked. 'Was there blood?' Nothing had happened. 'We had slumbered only too well.'

Nietzsche had hoped to spend the summer, as we have seen, at Messina. The scirocco, however, exacerbated his nerves. Then a letter came from Malwida von Meysenbug, urging him to meet her in Rome. A new fatality was drawing near to Nietzsche. Unsuspicious of danger, he left Messina before the end of April. At Rome the curtain rose on a new tragic episode.

FOR some time Nietzsche's friends had been seeking a secretary for him, who would grasp his philosophy sympathetically, read to him, and copy his manuscripts. Malwida von Meysenbug now believed that she had found the assistant Nietzsche wanted. A young Finnish girl, Mademoiselle Lou Salomé, accompanied by her mother, had been taken to Italy to distract her mind from an unhappy love affair with an older married man at Helsingfors, who had renounced her love to remain faithful to his wife and children. She was twenty, pretty, and intellectual. A lover of Wagner, she naturally met Malwida von Meysenbug and Paul Rée in Rome. Rée had come there fresh from visiting Nietzsche in Genoa. Malwida von Meysenbug, always an inveterate matchmaker, decided that Nietzsche should marry Lou Salomé. When he arrived in Rome, the subject was broached, and he was introduced to the girl one day in St. Peter's. She desired to be a writer one day. To help Nietzsche in his work would be an admirable apprenticeship.

Now the Russian custom, then as now, was to allow much more freedom to a young girl than was common in Germany, and Lou Salomé's mother relied on her daughter's quick intelligence. She had suffered too severely from her experience of love in Finland, and

suffering had made her exceptionally level-headed. To her, Nietzsche and Rée alike presented themselves as thinkers whose friendship would be valuable for her future development. As possible suitors, she would consider them dispassionately. She would keep her head under any circumstances.

At first Nietzsche studied her character cautiously and offered to instruct her gradually in his philosophy. She consented gratefully to his offer, but with no intention of compromising her freedom. She was already an advanced feminist for those days, and carried herself with a quick and settled assurance. We may take it that Malwida von Meysenbug discussed with her mother the propriety of her marrying Nietzsche or Rée. It is reasonably certain that the mother did not interfere, but left her daughter's future entirely to the girl's own judgment.

It was clear that Rée was much attracted to her. Rée's natural scepticism and cynical philosophy would respond to her present mood of disillusionment and tend to predispose her in his favour. Meanwhile Rée took care that his philosophy should control his more tender emotions, and limited himself to an intellectual friendship. He had not read Schopenhauer for nothing. He did not believe in marriage, though Nietzsche advised him to marry Lou Salomé.

The girl and her mother, accompanied by Rée and Nietzsche, soon bade farewell to Malwida von Meysenbug, and set out for a holiday at Orta. They spent several happy days together there, and Nietzsche

began to idealize Lou Salomé, as he always idealized a new friend on first acquaintance. It seemed to him that he had found a brilliant new disciple, eager and ardent, who had suffered as he had suffered, and who had renounced as he had renounced. She too had bidden farewell to her Tribschen idyll. She too intended to sacrifice her life for truth. He believed that destiny had provided him with a comrade at last.

Nietzsche left for Lucerne with Rée. On the following day Lou Salomé followed them with her mother. It was decided that the two women should stay for awhile in Lucerne. Nietzsche, agitated now and uncertain, fled to Basel. He stayed there in the household of the Overbecks for five days. Did he ask their advice, or merely tell them his story? We do not know. He decided to return to Lucerne, and warned Rée and the others of his coming. Rée and Lou Salomé met him at the station on the 13th of May. The two men saw the girl home, and then Nietzsche took Rée for a walk to the Lion of Lucerne. In front of this lion Nietzsche told his friend that he had come to an important decision. He asked Rée to propose marriage to Lou Salomé on his behalf. If she chose a free union outside wedlock, he would be as well pleased.

Lou Salomé was astounded by this proposal when Rée conveyed it to her. Instinct told her that marriage with Nietzsche would be fatal. Instinct told her also that Rée would be a more suitable comrade. She spoke of the matter with Rée at considerable length.

Nietzsche's proposal was impossible, but she feared to wound him too deeply. She played for time, and it was agreed between them that Rée should tell Nietzsche that no suitable opportunity had arisen as yet for conveying his proposal to her.

Several days passed and Nietzsche still lingered in Lucerne. Did he remember the day thirteen years before when he had come to Lucerne and met Cosima for the first time? It was on the 17th of May, 1869, that he was first received at Tribschen. Was it not on the 17th of May, 1882, that he went to Tribschen again with Lou Salomé? The coincidence cannot have been fortuitous. Was it by his design that the whole party had now stopped at Lucerne? Did he not hope that Rée had given Lou Salomé his message before this pilgrimage to the house that had only ghosts to welcome him?

Now, sitting outside the closed gates of empty Tribschen, he told Lou Salomé the whole story of his life. He told her about his father and his own childhood, his youth, his friendship with Wagner, what Tribschen had meant to him, and how all that was now a thing of the dead past which he must forget while he looked to the opening future. He bowed his head and drew patterns on the ground with his cane. When he rose, Lou Salomé tells us that his eyes were full of tears.

All was over, he told her, with Tribschen, but all was 'limpid' and all was beginning between them. Let her have confidence in him, and let them trust one

another. But all was not clear. He had not spoken to her of Cosima, and she had not told him that she could never be his wife. She promised to join him later at Tautenburg which is not very far from Bayreuth, and when he left her at Lucerne, he was the victim of a grievous illusion.

Nietzsche travelled to Berlin with a young friend, Paul Förster, whose brother was to marry Nietzsche's sister ere long. He would walk in the Grönewald and collect his thoughts while waiting for events to take their course. The Sunday crowds of trampers disillusioned him and he went on to Naumburg on the 24th of May to join his mother and sister. There was work to do, and he did it gaily. *The Joyful Wisdom* was soon finished and sent to the publisher. It came from the press at the beginning of September.

Nietzsche confided to his sister something of his interest in Lou Salomé, and it was agreed that they should all meet at Tautenburg. He wrote to Overbeck that he hoped to live with Lou Salomé in the future, and Overbeck wrote back warmly congratulating him. It would seem as if the plan of a formal marriage had been tacitly abandoned by Nietzsche, and that he believed at this time that Lou Salomé would agree to a free union. She would be his intellectual comrade and disciple. If others were scandalized, what would it matter as long as Lou Salomé was strong enough to ignore public opinion? They would go to some university together and work and study and live an unfettered existence.

Meanwhile Nietzsche wished his sister to know Lou Salomé better. They were both devoted Wagnerians. Why should they not both attend the opening performance of *Parsifal* on the 26th of July? Nietzsche's sister was eager to gratify her own very natural curiosity. The two women went to Bayreuth. Malwida von Meysenbug also was there, and all three visited Cosima at her warm invitation. Lou Salomé told Cosima, apparently, how Nietzsche had shed tears outside Tribschen on the anniversary of his first visit. Nietzsche's sister and Malwida von Meysenbug urged Cosima to reconcile Wagner with Nietzsche. The attempt was made. When Wagner heard Nietzsche's name, he rose in a rage and rushed out slamming the door.

There is a mystery here. We do not know what Lou Salomé said that day. It was reported to Nietzsche that she had denied him before Wagner. This seems improbable in the light of Wagner's hasty flight at the mention of Nietzsche's name. Probably she merely expressed her ardent admiration of Wagner's music. To praise Wagner as a composer was, in Nietzsche's eyes, to betray him to 'the old magician'. Whatever Nietzsche's sister reported to him sowed the seeds of his suspicion of Lou Salomé.

On the 13th of July he had written to Peter Gast: 'This young girl has the piercing glance of an eagle and the courage of a lion, and yet she is very young in appearance and perhaps has not long to live.' To Lou herself he had written when she had agreed to

join him at Tautenburg: 'The sky above me is pure. Everyone tells me that I look younger than ever. I do not wish to be lonely any more. I would learn to become a human being again. I have still, alas, everything to learn! . . . From the moment that you become my adviser, I shall be well advised, and I have nothing to fear in life any longer.'

The lion and the eagle were Zarathustra's companions in the pure sky, as Andler has well pointed out in this connection. If a liaison, abhorrent to the strong Puritan tradition of his family, were to take place between Nietzsche and Lou Salomé, his sister must have felt justified in making every effort to avert it. Whatever the reports were which she brought back to her brother from Bayreuth, they wounded him almost mortally.

On the 3rd of August he wrote to Peter Gast: 'A bird has flown by; alas, it was not an eagle!' He struggled with his pain, endeavouring to banish from his heart the ideal image of Lou Salomé he had conceived. He told himself that he scorned her and loved her no longer. If Wagner seemed to her to be the greater man, she was quite unworthy even of his esteem. He was destined by fate to be lonely. The Dark Hero would go on his way in desolate grandeur till his hour of fulfilment or of destruction came.

Yet there Lou Salomé was beside him in the flesh in those days of struggle at Tautenburg. Every five days (he wrote to Peter Gast on the 20th of August) they had a tragic quarrel. Every five days they were

once more reconciled. She wrote poems for him and brought them one by one. These poems survive and, as we read them, we can see how much they must have meant to Nietzsche at this time. They accept life and regard martyrdom for truth as a privilege. Was not this Nietzsche's own hard-won philosophy?

One of them especially seemed to him a great affirmation, and returning to music again, as if to challenge the master of Bayreuth on his own ground, Nietzsche set it to music in the resounding Wagnerian score of his tragic *Hymn to Life*, in which he unconsciously paid to Richard Wagner his greatest tribute by echoing the spirit of his harmonies. The tragic exultation of this music was his own proclamation that he accepted eternal suffering for the cause of eternal truth. He believed once more that Lou Salomé would march beside him as his comrade. Unfortunately, he was never so utterly alone.

Doubt tortured him once more. He had heard her and Paul Rée whispering together. Were they laughing at him? Strange rumours came to him about their friendship. His sister was evidently hostile to Lou. Could it be that she had good cause? He wrote feverish comments in his notebooks, attacks on Lou, attacks on Rée, attacks on his sister. The atmosphere around him was electric. He doubted everyone, and then was ashamed of his suspicions. He thought of fleeing to Paris alone and beginning life afresh without either Lou or his sister. He wrote at the beginning of September to Louise Ott, whom he had not seen since

1876, asking her if she could find him a quiet room in Paris where he could live undisturbed as a saintly hermit, 'not too far away from you, however, my dear lady'. Then the mood of flight left him as suddenly as it had come.

He went to Leipzig to stay near Lou Salomé. He remained there from early September to the beginning of November. Lou Salomé came from Berlin and joined him at the beginning of October, but she was accompanied by Paul Rée. They saw each other every day, and Nietzsche's sister, suspecting a liaison, quoted to him ironically: 'Thus began the downfall of Zarathustra.' He wrote to Overbeck in September that his sister was 'Lou's mortal enemy'. 'She has written to my mother that "she has seen my philosophy incarnated at Tautenburg" and "fears because I love evil and she loves good", and that "if she were a Catholic, she would go into a convent and atone for all the wickedness that will follow". To sum up, I have all the "respectability" of Naumburg marshalled against me, there is a complete breach between us, and even my mother so far forgot herself as to use a certain word, as the result of which I packed my trunks and myself off to Leipzig the first thing next morning.' From another letter written to Overbeck in the following February, we know what his mother said. 'Never for a moment have I been able to forget that my mother called me a disgrace to the grave of my father.'

Let us remember here *The Grave-Song* in *Thus*

Spake Zarathustra. 'There is the island of the grave, the silent island, and there are the graves of my youth. There will I bear an evergreen garland of life.

'So resolving in my secret heart, I sailed over the ocean. . .

'I am still the heir of your love and its inheritance, blossoming in memory of you with many-coloured, wild-springing virtues, my dearest ones . . .

'Yea, created for faithfulness, as I was created, and for dear eternities, I must call you now by your want of faith, O glances of the divine and vanishing gleams: for as yet I have learned no other name for you.

'O fugitives, you died for me all too soon. Yet you did not flee from my presence, nor I from yours: we are innocent in our want of faith in each other.

'They strangled you to kill *me*, O singing birds of my hopes. At you, my dearest, they always shot their malicious arrows — to enter my heart!

'And they entered it! Because you were ever the dearest of my possessions who possessed me, *therefore* did you die young, oh, much too soon! . . .

'And this, I say to my enemies: What is murder beside what you have done to me!

'You did me more wrong than all murder; you took from me what can never be recovered: — I say to you, my enemies!

'Did you not slay the visions and dearest wonders of my childhood? You took my playmates away! In memory of them I lay this wreath and utter upon you this curse.

'This curse upon you, my enemies! . . .

'When I achieved my most difficult task, and solemnized the triumph of my victory, then you made those who loved me cry out that now I was causing them the greatest grief. . . .

'And once I longed to dance as I had never danced before: I wanted to dance beyond the outermost heavens. Then you seduced my most dearly beloved minstrel. . . .

'Hail to you, Will of mine! Only where there are graves are there resurrections!'

Nietzsche's will to affirm life above all suffering led him to rush from home to join Lou at Leipzig. What crisis occurred there? It would seem that Nietzsche pressed Lou firmly at last for a decisive answer to his proposal by proxy at Lucerne. She must then have definitely refused him and made it clear to him beyond the shadow of a doubt that they could never marry or live together as partners for the rest of their lifetime.

In the bitter revulsion he drafted letter after letter to Lou and to Rée. They were 'human, all-too-human'. 'I did not create either the world or Lou: both would be less imperfect if I had done so.' What he wrote to Lou then we do not know. It is clear that she replied. He answered her letter bidding her farewell for ever. His ideal Lou remained in his heart beside his ideal Cosima, though in a secondary place, but after the beginning of November, Nietzsche never saw the human Lou Salomé again.

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NIETZSCHE hastened to Basel and sought consolation from Overbeck. He stayed three days with his friend before going south. On the 23rd of November he arrived at Rapallo, a beautiful village on the coast eighteen miles below Genoa. He had fled once more from those who had wounded him.

The Lou Salomé he had finally discovered was an honest human woman, who bore no relation to the ideal figment he had conjured up in his dreams. Nietzsche never forgave a friend for being different from his ideal conception of him. He never permitted a friend to develop according to a different ideal from his own. He had no right to demand that life should shape itself in his own image, but he constantly did so. He never respected personality. He must mould it to his own conception or else break it.

Naturally life refused to accept his moulding. Only Peter Gast, an exceptionally fluid character, escaped the fury of his resentment. Everyone else with whom he came into intimate contact was idealized according to a preconceived idea. When the divergence between ideal and reality became clear in a friend, that friend was ruthlessly cast aside in a kind of last judgment and consigned to the everlasting pit of

absence from his friendship. Often his judgment remained dissimulated. This dissimulation ministered to Nietzsche's sense of irony. It deceived his friends for a time, but out of a clear sky sooner or later the thunderbolt was sure to fall. The human Nietzsche was patient. The 'divine' Nietzsche slew without warning. The 'divine' Nietzsche was to slay even the human Nietzsche at the end in its lust for the godhead.

Meanwhile, after Leipzig, Nietzsche fell into an abyss of depression. Three times, in the course of that winter, after hearing from Naumburg, he sought to commit suicide. He took heavy overdoses of chloral at night in the hope that he would not wake to life in the morning. His family did not know at first that he had broken with Lou Salomé. They feared the worst. They feared Lou, they feared insanity, they feared suicide. They bombarded him with letters. They nearly drove him mad. He wrote to his mother that he had defended himself from his sister like a tormented animal, and that for years he had fled from her. He begged that she would leave him in peace, he said, but she had never relented her tortures for a moment. Such was his mood one day. On another day he will speak of his sister tenderly. Again he will accuse his mother. Presently he will break off writing or receiving any letters from home.

He had tried to be human as he had written to Lou Salomé. 'I do not wish to be lonely any more. I would learn to become a human being again. I have still, alas, everything to learn!' The attempt had failed and

ended in tragedy. Had he married Lou Salomé, he might have come down from the mountain and banished Zarathustra, as he had hoped to do, and the terrible vision of the Eternal Recurrence. Now he thought of the grave of his father which his own mother said he had disgraced. He remembered the dog which howled and the emerald moonlight. He was back at the rock of Surlèj. He would be a god. He was Dionysos whose predestined bride was Cosima-Ariadne. He would banish fear and write the poem of their bridal. He turned from human life to the life of his vision. In the light of his new resolution *Thus Spake Zarathustra* flowed from his pen.

The Rapallo to which Nietzsche came on the 23rd of November 1882 was not the Rapallo of to-day. It was a quiet seaside town as yet undiscovered by tourists, and basked in the sun of the Gulf of Tigullio. Portofino Mare was a fishing village unawakened as yet from its medieval dream. Portofino Mountain slipped down from Ruta to the sea in gentle wooded slopes unfrequented by man, save for an occasional woodman or charcoal-burner. From its height limpid sunsets shed their delicate beauty over the Mediterranean. This was Zarathustra's mountain indeed, a clear mountain of dream still guarded by eagles. It seemed as if destiny had brought Nietzsche rich gifts at last.

Nietzsche took a room in Rapallo at the Albergo della Posta, an inn which was on the sea-front and which has since disappeared, torn down to widen the

Passeggiata a Mare. He planned to write a poem on the Eternal Recurrence, which was to be called *Noon and Eternity*. The weather was mild. Saint Januarius was as propitious in 1883 as he had been the year before. Nietzsche went for long walks along the coast. In the morning he would follow the road south toward Zoagli. In the afternoon he would skirt the shore north through the village of Santa Margherita, past the castle of Paraggi, to Portofino, or would climb the Via San Nicola to San Lorenzo, past Ruta, and take the path over the summit of Portofino Mountain and so on down to the sea.

One day on the mountain a vision came to him and he wrote a poem. That poem, called *Sils-Maria* in print, is called *Portofino* in the manuscript. 'I sat and waited, but expected nothing, beyond Good and Evil, revelling in light, then revelling in shadow, absorbed by this play till I became the sea and noon and pure unmeasured time. Then all at once, my friend, the Unique became two . . . And Zarathustra passed close by my side.'

The hallucination is clear. In the panic heat and stillness of high noon, Nietzsche's soul stole out of his body, and, clothed in light, walked by his side, the body of his own desire. The illusion was absolute and precise. 'I could tell you the spot and the hour,' he wrote to Rohde.

The vision was to recur to Nietzsche more than once. It seemed to him simple truth, as he tells us that he was 'the mere incarnation, the mouth, the *medium*

of supernatural powers.' Only the word 'revelation' could describe his experience. 'You hear, you no longer seek; you take with overflowing hands; you do not ask yourself who is a giver. A thought illuminates you, like a flash of lightning, with necessity, and leaves you no hesitation about its form. I have never had any choice.

'It is a ravishment whose tremendous tension sometimes bursts forth in a flood of tears . . . You are completely outside yourself, most distinctly conscious of an infinite number of delicate modulations, coursings of the blood which run through you to your very toes. You are immersed in depths of beatitude, where the saddest and most sombre things not only serve for contrast but are a requisite condition, a tint implicit of necessity in this fine excess of light.

'Such is *my* experience of inspiration. I am certain that you must go back for thousands of years to find a man who is privileged to say: "It is also mine".'

It was, therefore, on Portofino Mountain that Nietzsche first experienced ecstasy. The vision at Sils-Maria was a vision of terror. The vision of Portofino was a vision of joy. It seemed to Nietzsche that divinity had descended upon him. He would write his sacred book and leave it to men. Schopenhauer had prophesied that a new healer would come to save the world. He was that new saviour. He came to his own on a mountain above the sea. *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he calls 'a fifth gospel', the meaning of which, he says, is clear to every man, woman, and child living in the world.

The first book of his poem was finished in ten days. On the 13th of February 1883, as he finished the last lines, Nietzsche read in a newspaper that Wagner had died at Venice.

The news came to him as miraculous release. The coincidence was startling. *Thus Spake Zarathustra* was his new gospel. His rival died at the moment he had finished the first book of his revelation. Now, surely, he would succeed to Wagner's glory. 'As to the real Wagner,' he wrote to Peter Gast a few days later, 'I shall endeavour to become largely his *heir* . . . I need scarcely add that I have written to Cosima. As to what you have to say about Lou, I couldn't help laughing.' He told Overbeck that if Wagner had lived, frightful things would have come to pass. To Cosima he wrote an unforgettable letter of which, we are told, only a draft survives.

'You have not refused in former solemn times to listen to my voice among other voices. Now when I hear the first news of the most solemn trial of all which has come to you, I know no other way to express my feelings than to speak to you wholeheartedly, and to you alone.

'Before the eyes of my soul I see, not what you are losing, but what you possess at this hour. Few human hearts can say with such profound feeling as yours: "What I have done for this single man has been my entire duty — it has also been my entire recompense."

'You have lived for a single aim, to which you have

sacrificed everything. Above your love of this man, you have grasped the loftiest things that *his own* love and hope ever conceived. You have served these things. You have joined yourself and your name to them for ever — to those things which do not die with a man, even though they are born with him.

‘Few souls have the will for such an act; and among these few who else would have had the *capacity* for it? That is why I lift up my eyes toward you, as I have always done, though indeed from afar, as the woman my heart respects above all whom it has known.’

These words were uttered too late. Cosima never replied to them. She sat alone in her room at Bayreuth in silent mourning, seeing no visitors, receiving no messages, refusing nourishment. She had no bounty to spare. All she had to give had been given to Wagner. For half a century she lived on with that memory. About Nietzsche she remained silent throughout her lifetime.

THE first book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* was written, as we have seen, under the stimulus of the utmost elation. The reaction, intensified by Cosima's silence, was correspondingly severe in its depression. It seemed to Nietzsche as if he were about to die. He fled from Rapallo to his old lodgings in Genoa. He believed that he had typhus and that his book was the work of a madman. He had other anxieties. Overbeck had hinted more than once that his pension from Basel was now grudgingly given, and he feared that solitude was an ever-increasing danger for Nietzsche. He advised him to seek for a teaching post in Basel again. A regular life would be good for him. Needless to say, Nietzsche refused the suggestion.

He was suspicious of all his friends now, even of Overbeck. He felt that they had no idea of the value of what he was doing. He craved support and admiration. Overbeck offered him both, but Peter Gast revived his spirits most by a letter in which he wrote: 'We must hope that this book will have a circulation as wide as that of the Bible, equal canonical authority, and the host of commentaries upon which this authority partly rests.' Such encouragement cheered him for the moment, but immediately afterwards he fell into an abyss of gloom.

To flee from his thoughts, he patched up his quarrel with his sister, and joined her in Rome at Piazza Barberini 56, early in May. He thought of founding his cenacle once more in a forest hermitage near Aquila when summer came. Then, doubting his friends in an access of disillusionment, he thought he would disappear for years and devote himself to his solitary mission.

These changing moods were determined in some measure by his use of chloral at the time, and rather more, we may suppose, by events in Rome. The Lou Salomé episode was revived for a short time. Malwida von Meysenbug, who was in Rome, had busied herself in the matter and now proposed that Lou Salomé should be forcibly repatriated to Russia by police authority, or obliged to marry Paul Rée, with whom it was reported that she was living in Germany outside the bonds of wedlock. This absurd plan, it goes without saying, had to be dropped, but the atmosphere of petty mischief-making which it implies must have driven Nietzsche to distraction.

He feared to be alone, and sought relief by going out into society. The first book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* came out in May, but attracted no notice. The acquaintances he now made had no knowledge even of its existence. When the evening was over, night cast a pall of loneliness over him. He felt that he was 'dead through immortality', and one night on an open loggia he was haunted by the sad melody of life and composed his *Song to Night* while he listened to the

Fontana del Tritone plashing in the piazza far below.

The heat became oppressive in June, and after debating with his sister where they should go for the summer, he decided to return to Sils-Maria. He left Lisbeth at Milan, and ascended to his favourite mountains. When he reached Sils-Maria on the 21st of June, there was snow on the ground. Elated by the clear cold weather, he set to work passionately. In ten days, the second book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, conceived in Rome, was completed and ready for the printer. His longing for Cosima is revived in these pages. Read *The Grave Song* with attentive care and you will catch the echo: '*Wie ertrug ich's nur?* How did I bear it then? How did I survive and heal these wounds? How did my spirit rise again out of those graves?' Isolde sings her parting notes once more. They rise from the silent grave of Nietzsche's longing.

Then life burst rudely into these elegies. Nietzsche's elation had disappeared, as always, when his book was finished. In the midst of his depression a letter from Malwida von Meysenbug came to Sils-Maria. It was addressed to Nietzsche's sister, but he opened it. Its contents have never been made sufficiently clear, but after reading it, Nietzsche's fury was roused against his old friend Paul Rée who, it seemed to him, had calumniated him grossly. It was Rée, not Lou Salomé, who was responsible for the mischief. So he decided, and he wrote at once to Rée and his brother two violent letters of abuse.

Rée's brother threatened to sue Nietzsche for slander.

Nietzsche offered satisfaction to both men, proposing pistols. The Overbecks and Nietzsche's sister became involved in the fray. Overbeck rushed up to the Engadine to smooth out the situation. The danger of a duel passed, and Nietzsche wrote to Lou Salomé's mother a letter closing the discussion so far as he was concerned. In the light of the facts, so far as they have been disclosed, neither Rée nor Lou Salomé seem blameworthy. Lou Salomé, assisted by Rée, it would seem, wrote a noble book on Nietzsche in that every year.

The question arose whether Nietzsche should now lecture at Leipzig. Heinze, the rector of the University, who had been his colleague at Basel, made it clear to him that the project was impossible. Nietzsche felt that he was ostracized. In despair he thought again of his childhood, and impulsively returned to his mother and sister at Naumburg toward the end of September. The old family quarrels were renewed.

His sister wished to marry an anti-Semite named Förster and to follow him out to a colony in Paraguay. Her mother did not wish to lose her. Nietzsche sided with his mother, but his sister held her own. 'Things are going very badly with me,' he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug. 'My visit in Germany is the cause of the trouble.'

He left Naumburg hastily and met the Overbecks at Frankfort. They were to travel together to Basel, but Nietzsche was so ill in the train that he had to stop at Freiburg. Next day he went on and spent three

days with the Overbecks at Basel. Slightly recovered, he pursued his journey south, and went on directly to Spezia. He was unusually restless and no place satisfied him. After halting at Genoa he finally settled at Nice in early December.

Chance favours us with an admirable portrait of Nietzsche at this time. While he was at Nice he made the acquaintance of Dr. Paneth, a young Viennese scientist, who wrote to his betrothed an account of his meeting and conversations with Nietzsche. 'There is no dreaminess or pose in him; he has an unusually lofty brow, smooth brown hair, pale, sunken eyes — for he is half-blind — bushy eyebrows, and a full face, clean-shaven except for a thick moustache . . . His manner of speaking is simple and delightful. He gives one an impression of grave dignity, yet of utterly unconstrained simplicity. He has a keen sense of humour and an irresistible smile.'

This pen-portrait is valuable as a corrective of the popular picture of Nietzsche at this time as a fierce hermit with a sharp tongue and a mad visage who snapped at strangers. Paneth found him in a bare carpetless room without a fire, though he was ill at the time. He told Paneth that he wished to be a composer, but dared not write music because of his nervous weakness.

The fine weather at Nice that winter brought about an improvement in Nietzsche's health, and he quickly set to work on the third book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Like its predecessors, it was finished

after ten days on the 25th of January, and published in February 1884. He was so elated that he wrote to Erwin Rohde that the German language had now reached its highest point of development. Luther and Goethe had wrought German speech to great strength and beauty, but he had surpassed them.

He took long walks in the mountains, danced and sang, laughed and talked to himself, and did not feel weary. Ecstasy returned as he wrote of the Eternal Recurrence, and he pledged his love to Eternity in flooding lyrical utterance. The stormy mistral roused him to exaltation. 'With the tempest called "spirit" I blew over the surges of the sea; I blew all the clouds away.'

A stranger at this time, Paul Lanzky, offered him a hermitage for the summer at Vallombrosa, and young disciples now began to write offering him their homage. But he was suspicious now of all those who came bringing gifts, and he shrank from these testimonials of esteem. Icy scepticism alternated now with fiery elation. Overbeck was anxious, but dared not interfere.

Euphoria, depression, euphoria — Nietzsche's spiritual thermometer fluctuated dangerously. In February he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug: 'I was an ass to return "among men". I should have foreseen what would happen to me. The principal thing is that I have matters a hundredfold more grievous to bear than human stupidity. It may be that I am a fatality for all the men of the future — just

a fatality — and it is even quite possible that one day I shall become silent for love of men.’

Such loneliness is impenetrable. Nietzsche is now beyond human affection. He believes that he is a god, and that no man knows him. He pities all men and women for their ignorance. In the fourth book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* the secret will be revealed, and he will write, in spite of himself, his theophany.

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AT this time a final effort was made to bring Nietzsche back into the Wagnerian fold. His sister was still a confirmed Wagnerian. Malwida von Meysenbug shared her views. The two women appear to have laid their heads together, not without the active approval of Cosima. They chose an ambassador from the Wagnerian circle. Heinrich von Stein was a brilliant youth whose career presented singular resemblances to the youthful career of Nietzsche. He had studied theology at Heidelberg and he had been converted to a rationalistic philosophy by Fischer and Dühring. His discovery of Giordano Bruno had affected him as the discovery of Schopenhauer had affected Nietzsche. Thence he had gone on to Schopenhauer, and Schopenhauer had led him in turn to Wagner. At Rome he had met Malwida von Meysenbug in the autumn of 1878. Cosima was then seeking a tutor for her son Siegfried. Heinrich von Stein was accordingly introduced to Wagner, and the two men were charmed with each other at first sight. The youth was called up for military service, but as soon as he was free, he became a valued member of the Wagner household. For the rest of his life Wagner's spell was upon him. He was at the Master's deathbed in Venice in 1883.

With many of Stein's ideas Nietzsche was in hearty sympathy. They had the same views on the Presocratic philosophers, the same aristocratic attitude toward life, the same valuation of suffering, the same disposition to emphasize living dangerously. Stein in his turn valued the work of Nietzsche, and respected the man as well as the philosopher. They had sent each other their books. Nietzsche offered Stein proofs of *The Joyful Wisdom*. Stein offered Nietzsche a book of dramatic dialogues. A correspondence followed. Some of the letters they exchanged have not yet been published.

In 1883, Nietzsche sent his new friend the first two books of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and later sent him the third book, to which Stein replied by translating for him three sonnets by Giordano Bruno, the heroic vigour of which was greatly admired by Nietzsche. Unfortunately Stein chose this moment to invite Nietzsche to hear *Parsifal* at Bayreuth, 'because I wish such a listener for *Parsifal* and a *Parsifal* for such a listener.' Nietzsche dissembled his feelings and invited Stein to visit him at Sils-Maria in the following autumn, adding that he was 'one of his greatest hopes.'

They met toward the end of August 1884. That first evening Stein saw his new friend in a poor humble room in the Engadine, racked by headaches and shivering with cold. Next day Nietzsche's spirits revived. The two men talked and laughed together. Nietzsche felt that he was six thousand feet above

Bayreuth. Stein felt that Bayreuth was six thousand feet above Sils-Maria. We have no clear record of their conversation. Stein said that he had understood only a dozen phrases of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Nietzsche was highly gratified. He had found a new disciple. The horns of elfland sounded a note of triumph. Stein was worthy. He could continue the master's work. He was no Lou Salomé.

Nietzsche wrote to Stein shortly afterwards: 'I am a Philoctetes mortally wounded. You have heard my groans. Now learn my faith. Without *my* arrows, they will not take Ilium.' To which Stein replied: 'My days at Sils are a noble memory, an important and solemn portion of my life. It is by attaching myself faithfully to such events that I find the means of making headway against the horror of existence or, better still, of finding a value in it.' He promised Nietzsche faithful and hearty comradeship and understanding. Nietzsche replied by sending Stein the noble hymn which now closes *Beyond Good and Evil*, calling passionately for new friends to replace the old.

Unfortunately, Heinrich von Stein was chained to Bayreuth. He had to choose. His choice was clear to Nietzsche in his reply. 'You spoke of Philoctetes' faith. I share that faith. I believe that, without the arrows of Philoctetes, Troy will never be conquered. But does Neoptolemos believe any the less that the greatest share in the conquest of Troy is that of *the dead hero*? Does this belief prevent him from understanding Philoctetes?' In other words Richard Wagner

is Achilles, and Stein assumes that Nietzsche recognizes the fact. Nietzsche's reply is lost, but must have been ironically clear enough. It did not banish Stein from his affections. Wounded and disappointed as he must have been, he valued the young man's admiration.

In the following year they sought each other out at Naumburg. Stein offered to join Nietzsche who was suspicious. Nietzsche feared Greeks bearing gifts from the shrine of Bayreuth, and withdrew into his shell. The two drifted apart amiably, and never saw each other again. When Nietzsche heard of Stein's premature death in 1887, he mourned the man, but he could never have followed him back to the Wagnerian cenacle.

Nietzsche left Sils-Maria in September 1884 after his meeting with Stein. He spent a few days at Basel, and Overbeck, who called upon him at his hotel, found him ill in bed and restless with excitement. Overbeck was disturbed, fearing a mental illness. 'Some day,' Nietzsche said to him, 'you and I will be here together again in this room; I shall be ill, as I am now; and you will be astonished again at what I tell you.' His words were low, his voice trembled, and his face was distraught. Overbeck listened to him without contradiction, spoke gently, and left full of fears. He did not see Nietzsche again till the tragic day in 1889 when he came to Turin to take his friend to the asylum.

Nietzsche now went to Zurich with two definite

objects in view. The first was to gain a hearing for Peter Gast's opera, *The Lion of Venice*. His efforts in this respect were unsuccessful. The second was to meet his sister, who had recently engaged herself secretly to Bernhard Förster without informing her brother. He had learned indirectly of the engagement, and wished to discuss it with her. He feared that this marriage would lead to grave trouble in the future.

Förster was a young Saxon professor who had ardently espoused all sorts of causes and conducted eager propaganda on behalf of them. He was an enthusiastic Wagnerite and a violent anti-Semite. Eager, generous, and impetuous, his energies carried him forward vociferously. Nietzsche's sister admired him because he held all the youthful opinions which her brother had outgrown. Unfortunately he held other opinions which Nietzsche could never have shared. He is historically important as a precursor of modern Pan-Germanism in its most violent and illogical form. He had colonial ambitions and was preparing to set forth for Paraguay with a colonizing group of German farmers. He hoped thereby to set an example to others. Nietzsche's sister was to accompany him to Paraguay after their marriage.

It is needless to point out how this marriage was to affect the Nietzsches. The mother mourned the coming loss of an only daughter upon whom she had come to depend. Nietzsche feared that his sister would succumb to the hardships of pioneer life in an unknown country. He also objected to the anti-Semitism

of his future brother-in-law, and feared that it would have repercussions on his own efforts to gain a hearing for his philosophy. Above all, he resented the fact that his sister was abandoning him and his task so that she might further during the rest of her life ideals which he had outgrown and to which he was now bitterly hostile. 'You have gone over to my antipodes,' he wrote to her. 'The instinct of your affection ought to have saved you from that. I shall not conceal from you the fact that I resent this engagement as an offence — and as a stupidity which will harm you more than it harms me.'

Now Nietzsche was to talk matters over thoroughly with her. She had a firm will and was not to be beaten. In the contest which followed, she won the fight to live her own life in her own way. No friend of Nietzsche ever won the same concession of freedom. Brother and sister parted happily. Nietzsche expressed his esteem for Förster's personal character. He reserved, however, the right to despise his opinions. His disappointment at Zurich was tempered, perhaps, by the radiant autumn that year, and by the fact that he found in that city a group of several feminine disciples.

From Zurich Nietzsche went south in November to Mentone. The weather made him unwell, and a quarrel with his publisher made him restless. He moved on to Nice and found dry sunny weather and a companion in Paul Lanzky with whom he went for long happy walks in the mountains. Lanzky was a

young German dilettante who had sought out Nietzsche after reading his works.

At their first meeting he had called Nietzsche 'Master,' and Nietzsche had replied: 'You are the first man to call me by that name.' They quickly became friends and spent their days together. When Nietzsche was unhappy, Lanzky respected his silence and left him alone. One morning in March 1885 Lanzky entered the Master's room and found him in bed, though the hour was late. He inquired anxiously after Nietzsche's health. 'I am ill,' Nietzsche replied. 'I have just had my confinement.' 'What do you mean?' cried Lanzky. 'I have finished the fourth book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.'

During the next year, stimulated no doubt by Stein and the memories of Cosima which the young man's presence had evoked, Nietzsche had been meditating a long dramatic poem. We have fragmentary notes in his hand which show that this poem was to have been a tragic drama about Zarathustra, embodying, however, the old Empedocles project, though substituting Zarathustra for Empedocles as the hero.

Not long before, in 1882, Gobineau had published in the *Bayreuther Blätter* a series of articles on the contemporary Persian theatre. This theatre, Gobineau had pointed out, was essentially religious, and Nietzsche detected a parallel between it and the choral lamentations of the Greeks for the dead Dionysos. Zarathustra was Persian. Zarathustra-Nietzsche was also, as we now know, Dionysos. The notes which Nietzsche

has left show us only too plainly that this projected drama was to revive the myth of Dionysos and Ariadne.

If Stein had been sent to Nietzsche by Cosima, the result of his mission was ironically tragic. Its effect was only to revive Nietzsche's longing for Cosima. The play was beyond his forces, but need we bewail our loss? The stimulus communicated to him by this new effort resulted in his masterpiece. It is to Cosima Wagner, through Stein, that we owe the magnificent poetry in the fourth book of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

Nietzsche offered the book to his publisher Schmeitzner, who refused it. Poor as he was, Nietzsche printed it at his own expense in an edition of forty copies. He gave seven of these to his friends. The others have disappeared. The book did not reach the public till 1891, two years after the philosopher had disappeared from the world into a clouded twilight of unreason.

He joined Peter Gast in Venice on the 10th of April 1885. He was lonelier than ever. Förster had returned from Paraguay, and the day of his sister's marriage was drawing near. He blessed the marriage, but could not bring himself to attend it. Now he would have no one in whom he could intimately confide. He consoled his heart only by the belief that the wanderer's shadow would still reply to his singing.

In June he returned to Sils-Maria. He cut himself off from his friends, and we know little of these months beyond the fact that he was absorbed in books and meditation. The fourth part of *Zarathustra* had led

him back to his youth and the studies out of which *The Birth of Tragedy* had arisen. His chance companions were fellow-boarders at Sils-Maria. They were all women, and one of them volunteered to be his amanuensis.

Nietzsche was sad and somewhat disillusioned about Peter Gast, who seemed unequal to the high musical task to which his friend had called him. He was also saddened by his sister's marriage and forthcoming departure with her husband to Paraguay. Should he see her once more, or would it be better to refrain? He feared that he might be drawn into a discussion of anti-Semitism with Förster, and he feared even more that he might break down emotionally during his farewell. At last, on the 13th of September, he set off for Naumburg. Förster was absent, and the meeting with his family unhappy. When Förster returned, his deference to Nietzsche proved disarming, and the farewell of brother and sister was affectionate and sincere.

Nietzsche went south and paused for a few hours at Munich, where his old friend Seydlitz showed him his collection of erotic Japanese prints. They seem to have delighted him and from time to time during the following winter Nietzsche speaks of Japan as a possible haven, and praises the free natural physical life of its people. He continued south and met Lanzky at Bologna whence they proceeded to Florence and later to Val-lombrosa. The autumn came early that year and drove Nietzsche away. In November he took refuge

again in lodgings at Nice. During the six months which followed, he laboured harder than ever. When he went to Venice in April 1886, he carried with him the completed manuscript of that limpid masterpiece, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

Thus Spake Zarathustra is a great poem. *Beyond Good and Evil* is its counterpart in prose. Effortless and serenely simple, it gave a new vigorous simplicity to the German language, bringing to it the light and colour of the South, a passionate sense of form, and a rich psychological subtlety. The student of Nietzsche's life will do well to turn to it, and examine with close scrutiny the philosopher's analysis of feminine instinct and of sexual appetite. Here Nietzsche is no longer off his guard. He knows what he is saying, and his judgment is considered and final.

His invitation to explore is deliberate. 'Wanderer, who art thou? Thou dost follow thy road, I perceive, without scorn, without love, with fathomless eyes, wet and sad as a plummet which cometh back to the light unsatisfied from every deep — what hath it sought in those depths? — with a breast that never sigheth, with lips that hide their loathing, with a hand which is slow to grasp; who art thou and what hast thou done? Rest here and refresh thy weariness — here everyone is a welcome guest! Whosoever thou mayest be, what pleaseth thee now? What will refresh thee? Say what thou dost desire! I offer thee all that I have. "To refresh my weariness?" "O curious one, what dost thou ask?" "Give me, prithee —?" "What? What

shall I give thee? Say!" "Another mask! A second mask!"'

The interior drama is gathering force. Nietzsche goes back 'like every man who would make a great leap.' He goes back to his youthful conflict, though its form has changed as he has matured through suffering. Suffering masks a man's face. Christ's face must have been a mask, for no one had suffered more. Nietzsche's mask is Christian, and he has longed all his life to be a god. He has been possessed with the longing for godhead. He has even longed for the Christian virtues and tried to practise them. There is hospitality for all in his inn, even for the wanderer who is his *doppelgänger*, his personal shadow. He would welcome that wanderer who is Lucifer-Dionysos, his other self — Lucifer-Dionysos who also sought so hard to be God and failed and fell. Might not Christ-Apollo and Lucifer-Dionysos take up their home in one breast — in Nietzsche's breast?

Such was his awful dream. Incarnate in him, they would be one with him and he one with them, a new Trinity which would rule and shine over the world in a terrible theophany. This marriage of Heaven and Hell is the shadow of his dream. Remember what ambition is shaping now in this son of a Lutheran parson. The drama has entered on its final act, and moves to its inevitable tragic conclusion. 'We men are — more human.'

XXXII

IN June 1886 Nietzsche left Venice and paused at Leipzig on his way to Naumburg to find a publisher for *Beyond Good and Evil*. The hostile atmosphere which he encountered in German publishing circles made him feel lonelier than ever before. It was clear to him now that he might hope for no wide recognition. He must write for himself as an audience. The public would continue to ignore his work completely. His life now contracted rapidly toward a point, and the knowledge of his utter isolation which this Leipzig experience brought home to him contributed decisively to his final catastrophe. The new book was issued by Naumann at Nietzsche's expense. It appeared in August and Nietzsche sent a copy of it to Overbeck.

The letter which accompanied the book is a tragic document. 'Hearken to my prayer, dear old friend,' he writes. 'Read it from cover to cover. Gather up your strength, all the strength of your benevolent feelings toward me, your patient benevolence which has been tried hundreds of times. If the book as a whole is unbearable to you, perhaps a hundred details of it will not be so. Ah! if I could give you any idea of my moral solitude. There is no one, among the living

or the dead, with whom I feel the slightest affinity. It is all more terrible than I can possibly tell you.'

After seeing his mother, Nietzsche returned to Sils-Maria early in July. He found human companionship in a young Swiss student, Meta von Salis-Marschlins, who was an emancipated feminist studying for a doctorate at Zurich. Nietzsche had met her before. She had known his mother and sister, and once she had visited him on the Riviera. Now she sought him out, and for seven weeks they walked and talked together. He refused to discuss his philosophy with her, and would have preferred that she should not read *Beyond Good and Evil*.

His proud loneliness was invincible. 'On no account read my book,' he wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug, 'and do not let me hear what you think of it. Let us grant that it may be read about the year 2000.' This pride masked his longing for some one to understand him. He awaited the opinions of his friends on the book, though he pretended to despise them. Burckhardt's half-hearted compliments depressed him. A Swiss reviewer afforded him better amusement by writing: 'Here is one of those dreadful explosive shipments which only travel by railway surmounted by a black flag.'

On the 8th of July he wrote to his sister: 'Where are those old friends of mine to whom I once felt so securely bound? We live in different worlds and speak different languages! I wander among them a stranger, nay, even an outlaw! No word, no glance now reaches

me. I am silent, for no one understands my words. Alas, I may say that they have never understood me! . . . It is terrible to be doomed to silence when I have so much to say. Was I made for loneliness, never fated to find any man who could understand me? This is the most appalling solitude, *to be different*, to wear a brass mask harder than any brass mask. Perfect friendship is possible only *between equals*. *Between equals*: the words are intoxicating. What confidence, what hope, what redolence of happiness they promise to one who lives always alone of necessity, to a man who is *different*, who has never met one of his kind! . . . A *profound* man must have friends, unless he has a God. But I have neither a God nor a single friend!

On the 31st of August, Franz Liszt died at Bayreuth and was buried in state by Cosima from Villa Wahnfried. His death stirred old memories, and Nietzsche wrote to Malwida von Meysenbug: 'Old Liszt . . . has been buried . . . as if he were an inseparable fragment [of the Wagnerian world] . . . This has wounded my very soul as I thought of Cosima. It is one falsity more around Wagner's memory.'

As Nietzsche meditated sadly, he found himself once more living in his youthful past, and he began to write a series of autobiographical prefaces for his early books. He completed three of these, one for *The Birth of Tragedy* and two for *Human, All-Too-Human*, before leaving Sils-Maria. Then, with these ringing elegies in his ears, he travelled south and joined his

friend Paul Lanzky in a little inn on the slopes of Portofino Mountain.

This inn at Ruta still stands and bears a tablet in memory of Nietzsche's sojourn. It is little frequented, and a sadness still lingers about it, though the view from its balcony built out over the mountain is supremely beautiful in the sunset glow. Terrace after terrace swiftly descends to the wash-tinted colours of Camogli below, and the sea stretches out in the haze to the distant Alps which emerge as sentinels on the eve of stormy weather.

The inn is built on the watershed, and Zarathustra often stood here where his eyes beheld the strange sea on either hand, or followed the track which leads up from the door to the forests of Portofino Mountain, where he lit signal fires and inaugurated his religion of flame. His fire was a beacon that questioned the sky and gathered to itself all weary mariners, dead stars, and uncharted solitudes. Below, at San Fruttuoso, lay the unregarded tombs of the Dorias, the very empire of the sea lying sleeping and forgotten, even as the empire of the mind which Nietzsche ruled, as it seemed, was secret and unsuspected by other mortals.

To Lanzky Nietzsche seemed changed. He stooped now and his features had altered. He was growing old. The two men took long walks on the mountain and rested in the forest, and talked of many things. Nietzsche's thoughts were often of the past. He wrote new prefaces at this time for *The Dawn of Day* and for *The Joyful Wisdom*. He thought of Cosima and of

Bayreuth. His memories went back to the siege of Metz, to *Tristan*, to Tribschen, to the day of his fateful parting, and then he remembered how Zarathustra had come to him on this very mountain, and with Lanzky he lit festival fires and saluted their flames. In this mood he now added a fifth book to *The Joyful Wisdom*, called significantly *We Fearless Ones*.

Two Germans came to stay at the inn, and Lanzky was proving too faithful. Nietzsche felt the need of solitude and fled to Nice. He had conceived a new work, *The Genealogy of Morals*. Life was darkening once more. Under Bismarck, Germany became more and more provocative and warlike. There were storm clouds everywhere, and Nietzsche was ashamed of the vulgarization of his country. Nice was restless, and in February there was a severe earthquake during the carnival. Nietzsche ran from house to house seeking news of his acquaintances. When he learned that they were safe, he went back to bed and slept soundly through the further shocks which followed.

He lingered later than usual on the Riviera, and spent the month of April at Cannobbio, then basking in solitary beauty on Lake Garda. But the sun set early behind the mountains, and the chill which followed exacerbated his nerves. His eyes pained him and he feared the glare of Venice, or he would have joined Peter Gast for a season. He wandered on irresolutely, and reached Zurich on the 1st of May 1887.

The city seemed grey and the people more stupid than usual. He continued on into the mountains.

When he came to Chur, he was in a mood of suicidal melancholy. His *accidia* plunged him into a black abyss of frustration in which he could no longer formulate even the simplest desire. His resentment exploded on Rohde, his oldest friend. Taine had written him during the previous autumn expressing his admiration for *Beyond Good and Evil*. Nietzsche had lived on this praise for months. Now Rohde expressed in a letter an unfavourable opinion of Taine. Nietzsche replied angrily that Rohde was a fool, and that Taine was 'one of the very few men who render their age immortal.' To depreciate the only philosopher who had recognized Nietzsche was to depreciate Nietzsche himself. In his loneliness this was intolerable.

On the 13th of June Nietzsche returned to Sils-Maria only to find it buried in winter snows. He was discouraged and ill. He suffered from fever, giddiness, and insomnia. Meta von Salis-Marschlins endeavoured to console him. She spent six weeks with him ministering to his comfort. When he wished to be alone she respected his silence. They walked in the mountains or rested beside the lake, and Nietzsche enjoyed her intellectual conversation.

When summer came, it came suddenly with tropical exuberance. Chrysanthemums and rhododendrons bordered the lake in profusion. The mountain sides were carpeted with Alpine flowers. Nietzsche's mood softened in the sunshine to elegiac sadness as he remembered his schooldays and friends dead or forgotten. Paul Deussen visited him on his way to Greece

with his wife. The two old schoolfellows were glad to see each other again, but Deussen left, saddened to find that Nietzsche had grown old. Meta von Salis-Marschlins left in September. 'Now I am widowed and alone,' Nietzsche sighed as they parted. He was left with the proofs of *The Genealogy of Morals*, which soon appeared.

It is his darkest and most cruel book, his most explicit confession of suffering, his most determined facing of life as it confronted his own experience. 'What is the *meaning* of a philosopher paying homage to an ascetic ideal?' he asks. And he replies that it is because 'he wishes *to escape from* torture.' Lucifer suffers in the Hell of absence from the God he has denied because he would supplant him. Now he bows to God's ideal in hope of a respite. But there is no respite, and he falls back on his own refusal.

'Every man who has ever built a "*new heaven*" in any place found the energy for it in his *very own hell*.' Nietzsche will build his new Heaven in defiance of the Most High. He will be the man of the greatest health in spite of his very weakness, the unknown Creator who will redeem the world. The radiant future is night. Transfiguration will come through 'Zarathustra, the Atheist.'

XXXIII

MEANWHILE, before the new age is ushered in, Nietzsche feels that he must engage in a final battle to put Wagnerism to rout. If his books have not sufficed to win him a hearing, perhaps his music will conquer. He is greater than Wagner. Then may not his music be greater than Wagnerian music? He asks Peter Gast to orchestrate his *Hymn to Life*. 'It will be played some day,' he says, 'when I am dead, in memory of me.' He sent the published score to various conductors, but in vain. They politely acknowledged it, and that was all. The musicians too were involved in a conspiracy of silence, it seemed to him.

On the 22nd of October 1887 he arrived at Nice once more after a shattering journey. The weather was cold and rainy for several weeks. Nietzsche was melancholy and irritable. In a letter to Rohde he insulted his oldest friend. Their friendship ceased, and Nietzsche was lonelier than ever. He was soon consoled by a letter from Georg Brandes, who had read *The Genealogy of Morals* and told Nietzsche that he felt the air of a new intelligence in his books.

As the weather improved, Nietzsche's mind became more active. He was preoccupied now with musical theory, and came to the remarkable conclusion that,

after all, there had never been any German music. German composers, it seemed, were really French. Wagner himself was in a bad French tradition. He decided that he much preferred the music of Offebach.

Little by little Nietzsche retreated into his cave. The hard glare of the Mediterranean sunlight tried his eyes severely, and he was obliged to live in shuttered rooms. As he gradually came to require this physical obscurity, so his mind sought obscurity also. He deliberately endeavoured to dehumanize himself, to eliminate all personal colouring from his existence. So, it seemed to him, he would find his irreducible Ego, the real Nietzsche on whose foundations the future Creator of a new world might build.

'I am no longer able,' he writes to Peter Gast on the 15th of January 1888, 'to keep on any sort of terms with reality. When I am unable to forget reality, it breaks me.' The shadows of Nietzsche's last prison-house are closing in upon him, and he retreats for his final leap forward. There remain to him less than twelve months more of life in a human world.

On the second of April, he left for Turin in confusion. At Savona, he took the wrong train, and found himself on an express bound for Genoa. His luggage and he had parted company. He spent an exhausted night at Sampierdarena, and next day bade a last farewell to Genoa. On the 5th of April, he found himself in Turin.

Signs of euphoria and exaltation are evident at

once. Turin seems to Nietzsche a triumphantly royal city. Its boulevards and gardens are perfect. The snowy heights smile down on the blossoming city. Its noble palaces and arcades are glorious and kingly. The Po shines with emerald light like Dionysos. Turin is a jewel poised in infinity.

Nietzsche found a room on the third floor of a house at Via Carlo Alberto 6, not far from the palace 'from which you leave to be crowned king.' His own kingdom is nigh, and the coincidence pleases him. Even now he perceives that everyone shows him deference. One evening he goes to the Teatro Carignano. They are singing *Carmen*, and he comes home with a new resolution. He will write a book which will destroy Wagner's music for ever. That book is *The Case of Wagner*, and is soon achieved.

The fires of anger, which he had banked for more than ten years, now burst forth in savage destruction. Nietzsche's will to power explodes at last in devastating abundance. This book is a deliberate calculated murder. Nietzsche will slay the god he has worshipped and take Wagner's place in the heavens. Dionysos will claim Ariadne from the Minotaur, even if he must slay her to assure his claim. 'I know no single case,' he writes, 'wherein the tragic irony which is the very essence of love is expressed so severely and terribly as in Don José's last cry, "Yes, I have killed her, my Carmen, my Carmen, whom I have adored!" . . . Artists suppose that they are unselfish in love because they seem to seek another creature's advantage at the

expense of their own. But in return they long to *possess* that other creature . . . God himself is no exception to His rule . . . He becomes terrible if His love is not returned.'

Early in June Nietzsche went to Sils-Maria to find it buried in snow and icy frost. Twenty-four days of freezing rain followed one another without respite. Nietzsche was confined to his room by illness. It seemed to him that he had exhausted his last reserves. He felt afraid. Would death come to him before he had won recognition? His loneliness was beyond his strength, and he summoned to him Meta von Salis-Marschlins. She arrived at the end of July and, whenever the weather permitted, they made excursions together in which he confided to her his lonely homelessness.

Did she understand? Apparently not. She sympathized with him in a practical way, but did not realize that he was desperately offering her his heart. He strove to cure himself by physical exhaustion, taking long walks and climbs in the stormy weather. His exaltation increased from day to day. One morning at two o'clock, as his landlord was leaving the house to hunt for chamois, he found Nietzsche up and about. 'Who knows?' he said. 'Perhaps I too one day shall hunt my game on the summits.'

His writing kept furious pace with his exaltation. *The Twilight of the Idols* and *The Antichrist* followed each other with terrible speed as the weather became more stormy. Flood followed flood, the roads were

almost impassable and Sils-Maria was no longer a possible haven. With difficulty Nietzsche found his way down to Como. On the 22nd of September he reached Turin once more with two books completed, a shadow of a man who believed himself a god.

'The aphorism and the sentence,' he had said in *The Twilight of the Idols*, 'of which I, the first among Germans, am master, are the forms of "eternity."' I aim to say in ten sentences what would fill a whole volume by any other man, and what any other man does *not* say in an entire volume. In my *Zarathustra* I have bestowed on man the most profound book in his possession. Soon I shall bestow on man the most independent book.' And *The Twilight of the Idols* concluded with these words: 'With this book I return to the point from which I began my career. *The Birth of Tragedy* was my first transmutation of all values. With this book I take my stand once more on the ground from which my will and energy spring. I am the last disciple of Dionysos. I am the prophet of the Eternal Recurrence.'

Now he wields Thor's hammer against the gods and seeks to slay them with *The Antichrist*. In his preface he prophesies. 'The day after to-morrow shall be mine. Some men are only born posthumously.' He is asphyxiated by the foul stench of modern men. He is visited by a feeling darker than the darkest melancholy — 'contempt of man.' 'It is indecent to be a Christian nowadays, *and it is here that my loathing begins . . .* There has only been one Christian and he *died* on the

cross. His "gospel" also *died* on the cross.' What survived was 'evil tidings.'

The only Christian thing is the way of life which was led by Christ who died on the cross, and that life is still possible, though no one has ever lived it. The gospels have been falsely 'read as the *book of innocence*.' Only one man has not been deceived by them, Nietzsche himself, and 'perhaps he is only a monster.' The world has been deceived by 'epileptics of ideas', morbid spirits whose fanatic pose has seduced the multitude. Christianity through these men has become a terrible secret perversion, 'the one everlasting stain upon mankind.' And '*time itself*,' Nietzsche concludes, 'is based on the evil day when this fatal destiny was born — on the birthday of Christianity. *Why not rather base time on its last day? On to-day?* — To-day comes the Transmutation of all Values! . . .'

In other words, the day is at hand when man for his own salvation must choose between Christ and Nietzsche-Dionysos.

XXXIV

NIETZSCHE's last autumn in Turin passed in infinite golden euphoria. He writes in *Ecce Homo*: 'On the 30th of September a glorious triumph ; the seventh day; the rest of a god on the banks of the Po . . . I had never known such an autumn before, nor imagined it to be possible on this earth — a Claude Lorraine infinitely projected, each day as wildly perfect as its predecessor.'

He had returned to his old room and used to improvise at the piano belonging to his landlord's daughter. Once more it seemed to him that everyone showed him deference. Faces lighted up when they saw him. The old women in the market chose for him their sweetest grapes. He finished *The Antichrist* and wrote a preface for *The Twilight of the Idols*. He took long walks and went to French operettas. He glorified his most simple experiences, and found happiness everywhere. Peter Gast increased his mental exaltation by his letters in which he hymned Nietzsche's supreme greatness. From these letters Nietzsche would turn with redoubled enthusiasm to the manuscript books now known as *The Will to Power*.

These manuscript books contain his thoughts jotted down from time to time since 1882. As they are

arranged at present, they do not represent any fixed form determined by Nietzsche, though they follow roughly a plan he drew up at Nice in the spring of 1887. The task still remains for some editor to fuse all the work of this period in an architectonic structure.

To the biographer, the most significant section of *The Will to Power*, as we know it, is that which has been entitled *Dionysos*. Here we may trace in Nietzsche's most lyrical prose the later psychological development of his tragedy from the mystical experiences embodied in *Zarathustra* to the final dualistic theophany of the end.

Dionysos and Christ on the cross are the two great religious types between whom Nietzsche is torn. Sometimes it seems to him that he is Dionysos. At other times he longs to identify his suffering with that of Christ on the cross. He oscillates between the two till he finally seeks to realize himself by uniting and fusing both. When the day comes on which he believes that he is Christ-Dionysos, his endurance fails him and he comes to the end of his striving.

'Dionysos versus Christ,' he writes. 'Here is the contrast! They do not differ in their martyrdom, but Christ's martyrdom has a very different meaning. Life itself—the everlasting richness and recurrence of life—breeds suffering, destruction and the will to self-annihilation. On the other hand, Christ's suffering as the Innocent Man is against life: it is life's condemnation. You will perceive that we are faced with the meaning of suffering. Are we to give it

a Christian or a tragic sense? The former leads to a holy life; in the latter, *existence itself is holy enough* to justify tremendous suffering. The tragic man accepts the most terrible pain: he is strong enough, rich enough, and sufficiently capable of becoming a god, to succeed in this. The Christian, on the other hand, denies even happiness on earth: he is so feeble and poor and disinherited that life makes him suffer in any form. God on the cross is a curse on life, bidding man deliver himself from the burden of life. Dionysos hacked into bits is a *promise* of life, for ever reborn and rising again from destruction.'

Thus Nietzsche leaned to the side of Dionysos. In the midst of his deep sense of tragic glory, he sought to obtain acknowledgment and tribute. He wrote to Hans von Bülow at this time urging him to produce Gast's *Lion of Venice*. 'I am sure you realize that the greatest soul of our age has expressed to you a wish.' He added that Bülow would now have a rest from him, at which Bülow exclaimed: 'God be praised!' He procured the insertion in a new review of an article by Peter Gast on *The Case of Wagner*, in which his friend said that a *vita nuova* for the world would date from the publication of Nietzsche's books.

Nietzsche now wrote in three weeks his autobiography, since published as *Ecce Homo*, in which his self-glorification is pathological. He seeks in this book to establish the fact of his fundamental physical and mental health. To Nietzsche exuberance is the most visible sign of health, and *Ecce Homo* rollicks with

exuberance. Yet this exuberance is a mask, as he confesses. 'I know of no more unhappy reading than Shakespeare. How he must have suffered to have found it so necessary to be a clown! Who *understands* Hamlet? It is certainty, not doubt, which always drives us mad.'

Nietzsche's certainty is based on an unplumbed abyss of contradiction. 'If the soul and goodness of every great man were united, the sum of it all would not suffice to create a single discourse of Zarathustra. The ladder which he climbs and descends is infinitely long; he has seen, willed, and *gone* further than any other man. Every word uttered by this most affirmative soul is a contradiction. In him every contradiction meets in a new unity. The highest and lowest powers in humanity, the sweetest and gentlest and most terrible of all, gush forth with eternal certainty from their source. Till he came, no man knew what height or depth or even truth was.'

Such is Nietzsche's fulfilment in his own eyes. 'Now,' he says, 'I know my fate . . . I am not a man. I am dynamite . . . Now man may begin to hope once more since I have lived . . . The strongest kingdoms of the old order are blown to atoms, for they were founded on a lie. There will be such wars as this earth has never seen. From now on, only after me will there be politics on the grand scale . . . I am the most terrible man who has ever lived; but this will not hinder me from being the most beneficent. I know the delight of *annihilation* corresponding to my

power of annihilation . . . The unmasking of Christian morality is the greatest event in history. It is a catastrophe. He who has achieved it is a fatality, cutting in two the history of the world. Time is reckoned backward and forward from him . . . Have you understood my meaning? — *Dionysos* against *Christ!*'

To this lonely god on the banks of the Po a letter now came from a lonely demiurge in Denmark, the Swedish dramatist Strindberg, to whom Brandes had mentioned our philosopher. Nietzsche saw the hand of fate in this correspondent. Strindberg should be his new messenger of good tidings.

Zarathustra had been his last disguise. Now he would throw off all masks and clothing and appear in his final theophany as Dionysos, naked and shining in the awful emerald light of his majestic godhead. So should Ariadne know at last that her lover was divine and had come to claim her for his own. *The Dionysian Dithyrambs* are one of his last affirmations. In *The Complaint of Ariadne* his beloved beholds her god. In the embrace of Dionysos and Ariadne the Superman will be conceived, and out of their marriage will spring the new race which is destined to inhabit the earth for ever.

X X X V

THE year 1888 drew rapidly on to its close. Between the 28th of December and the 3rd of January 1889 Nietzsche left the world of reality for ever. In his radiant happiness, he believed that he was the new ruler of the heavens and the earth, omnipresent, omniscient, almighty, who had come to save mankind as a new redeemer. As Dionysos he was a violent judge, as Christ he was gentle and humble. It was Christ who conquered at the end.

Nietzsche had gone out on the 3rd of January and, as he was passing, he saw a driver cruelly treating a horse in the Piazza Carlo Alberto. Consumed with pity, he flung his arms around the neck of the horse. He had a slight stroke of apoplexy. His landlord, who saw a crowd gathering around him, led him back to his room and put him to bed, where he lay for two days and nights in deep lethargy.

When he woke, it seemed that he had left the world of man behind. He was Prado now or Chambige, each of whom was an assassin. He was Prince Eugene of Savoia-Carignano assisting at his own public funeral. He was Victor-Emmanuel, the Count de Robilant, and Cardinal Antonelli. He ran to the post office and the railway station and accosted people, announcing

to them that he was God in disguise. He wrote to his friends and signed himself, 'Dionysos,' The 'Crucified,' and 'The Antichrist.' To Strindberg he wrote calling himself 'Nietzsche-Cæsar.' The last tragic note of all went to Cosima Wagner:

'Ariadne, I love thee!

Dionysos.'

And in the joy of his apotheosis he sat at the piano, as he had sat that last day at Tribschen with Cosima, and improvised the songs which are sung in Heaven by Dionysos to his bride.

The faithful Overbeck came for him. Dionysos accompanied his friend graciously to the asylum. To the doctors he said quietly enough: 'It is my wife, Cosima Wagner, who has brought me here.' Was his madness the last mask of all? Overbeck wondered, and we shall never know.

He died at Weimar in his sister's house on the 25th of August 1900. His sun was in the zenith. It was high noon.

EPILOGUE

WE have come, we are told, to the final liquidation of Western life. Europe is full of prophets of despair. They declare that we are spiritually bankrupt, and that out of this our chaos we shall build no dancing star. We are hungry and there will be no food for us; we are thirsty and no water will cool our throats. Our young men who have fought believe this gospel, and either sing: 'Eat, drink, and be merry,' or flee to an ivory tower in the brain or the South Seas. They find no solid ground beneath their feet, and dance the dance of death on the tomb of faith, or drug themselves with the fatalism of Asia. Their heroism is the smirk of Charlie Chaplin, their cowardice a retreat into Eastern temples. And no man speaks with faith, and they have no hope.

The European faith was once in God. Since the Renaissance that faith has slowly altered. From the Renaissance through the days of the Reformation a plant has slowly germinated and grown, a plant which bloomed in a waste of destruction at last in the Reign of Terror and the French Revolution. For faith in God was substituted faith in Man, perfectible Man who one day would be as God; and now around us we see the God we have made, ourselves who are going to

die, they say, without too much glory, lonely and hungry and poor, who have lost our souls.

I have been trying to show that when we have worshipped Man, as we thought, we have worshipped a different god, a Lonely Hero. Our greatest men, our generals, poets and sculptors, philosophers and musicians, statesmen and warriors, scientists, theologians — those to whom we have given our hearts and utter allegiance — have been men possessed by a single heart, the heart of 'the Lonely Hero,' the heart of him who longs for the Heaven from which he is outcast, the Heaven from which he was driven by Michael's sword.

Michelangelo, Marlowe, Milton, Swift, Blake, Pascal, Napoleon, Stendhal, Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Hölderlin, Alfieri, Byron, Shelley, Emily Brontë, Carlyle, Schopenhauer, Wagner, Melville, Poe, Baudelaire, Leopardi, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Ibsen, Strindberg, Rimbaud, Nietzsche, Lawrence — these were the noblest, yet none of these were free. They were all possessed. The nobler the man, the greater the possession. The best of us abdicated our human freedom, and Lucifer entered in.

Of all the possessed, I have chosen first Friedrich Nietzsche, for he was the frankest and clearest of them all. In him we see how the soil was prepared, how the seed was sown, and how the plant grew to maturity. His life and writings embody the modern drama, 'the birth of tragedy out of the spirit of light,' the death of our civilization destroyed by the Son of the Morning.

We have not abdicated Heaven as yet, and if we do, we shall abdicate only because the Dark Hero has planted despair in our hearts. We are free men, and we have the power to choose. Shall we marry Heaven and Earth as the sole purpose of our creation, or shall we sink into the abyss while we vainly attempt to consummate the Marriage of Heaven and Hell? It is a noble choice and a free one. Above all the doubts of the heroes, let us cling to this: even by the Dark Hero's standards, we are free.

GRUYÈRES, 1927—OXFORD, 1932.

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